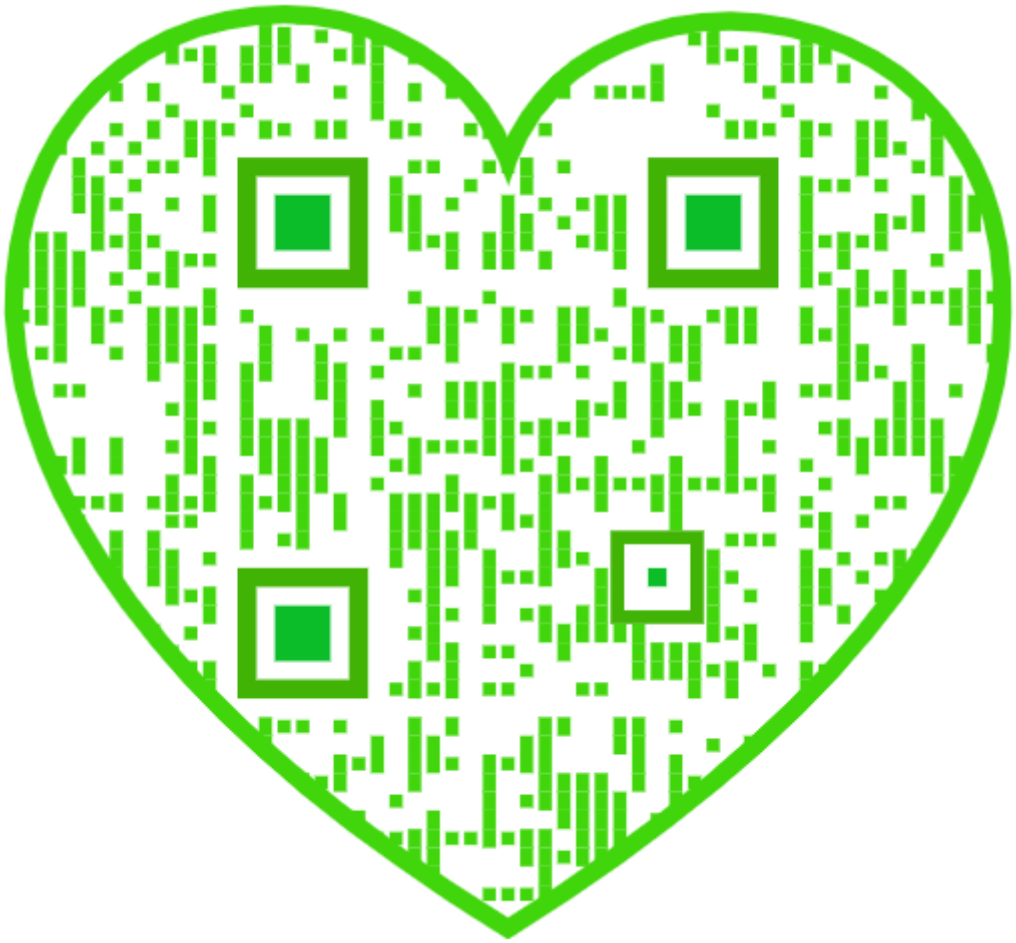

THE BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

VOL. V.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

EDITED BY

ALFRED E. T. WATSON

Volume V.

JULY to DECEMBER 1897

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THE
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July 1897

A FISHER'S TRAGEDY

BY W. M. WILCOX

WHEN Sidney Forrest stepped into his train at Paddington on a certain lovely morning early in April, it was with the air of one who has thoroughly earned his holiday. He had worked virtuously for the last three months, and although he was well aware of the ancient adage which gives out that 'virtue is its own reward,' he felt that he was thoroughly justified in looking for his reward in something more tangible than in staying at home and contemplating ninety odd days of virtue. As he sank into his comfortable seat with an accompaniment of rods, landing nets, creels, and all the paraphernalia dear to the heart of the fisherman, he determined to forget for the next three weeks the existence of such a bugbear as 'copy,' and to regard the whole tyrannical race of editors and publishers as extinct as the dodo. With this laudable object in view he proceeded to open his 'Field,' and was soon deeply immersed in the 'Reports from the Rivers, &c.'

The tall-hatted, frock-coated Sidney Forrest of Fleet Street was a very different individual from the Sidney Forrest who stepped out of the little Welsh fishing inn the morning after his arrival. Clad in rough homespun, with a cap of the same material, literally bristling with flies, on his head, and his legs incased in the orthodox waders, he smiled to himself as he

thought what a sensation he would create if he were to walk suddenly into 'the Club' in his present get-up.

It was a lovely morning, and the scene which presented itself to Forrest's eyes as, having put his rod and tackle together, he stood for a moment contentedly filling a pipe of huge dimensions, was well worthy of contemplation. Immediately below the hotel, which occupied a position of prominence on some rising ground, flowed the river. On the left its course could be traced for a considerable distance by means of intermittent glimpses of silver, shining bright in the morning sun. The view on the right was quickly blotted out by a steep hill thickly covered with pine-trees. On the further side the ground stretched, broken and wild, over a vast tract, though here and there patches of green showed where an attempt at cultivation had been made. The whole landscape was surrounded by a rampart of hills showing hazily blue in the distance, and a few of the white farmhouses—so familiar to travellers in Wales—scattered haphazard over the scene, proved that this wild-looking district was not entirely inhabited by the curlew and plover.

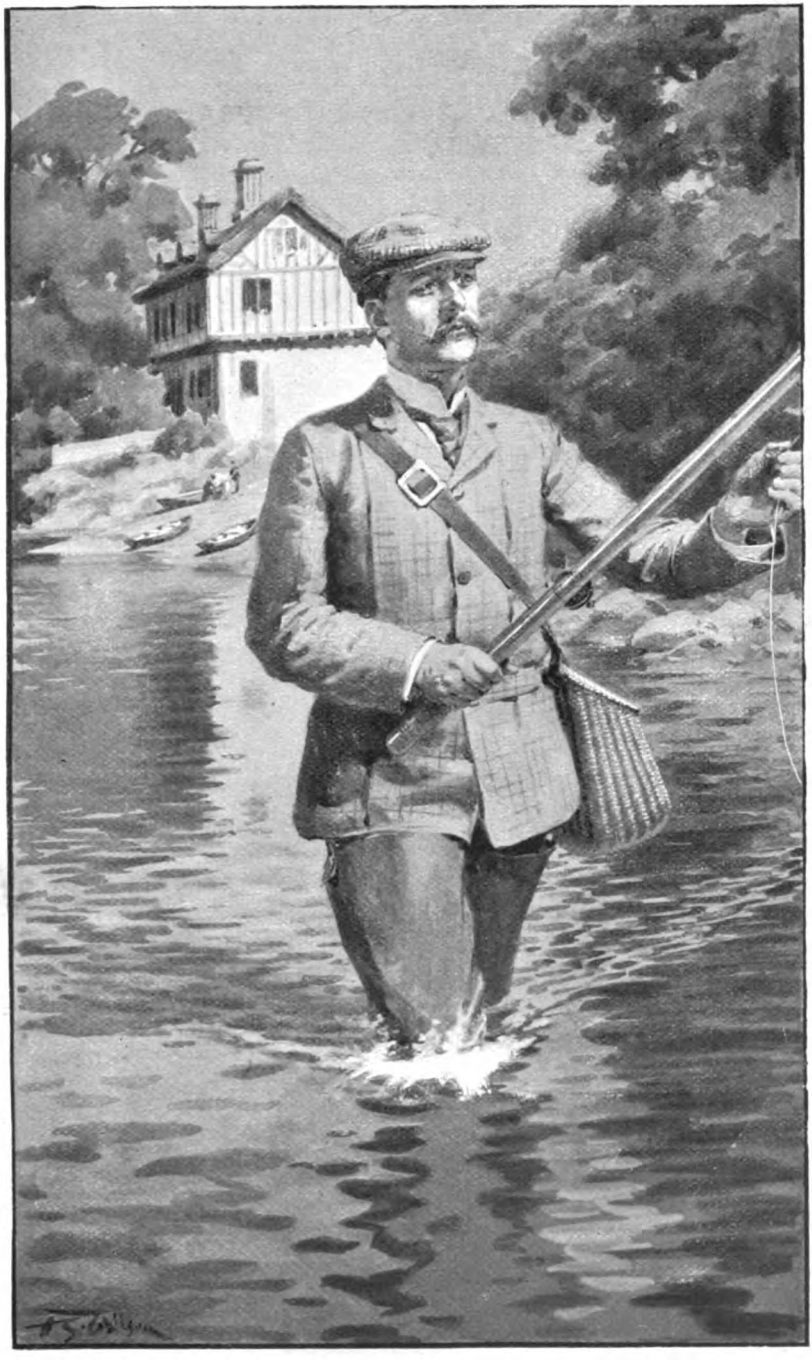
'A fine morning, sir,' said the landlord, as he watched Forrest light his pipe and gather up his paraphernalia preparatory to beginning operations; 'rather too bright to do much good, I fear.'

'Well, I'm going to have a try, anyway,' replied the young man, as he fastened his landing net on to his creel. 'Shall I go up or down?'

'Up's your best chance,' said the landlord, 'but keep an eye on the water, sir; there must have been a deal of rain in the hills last night, and the stream comes down very quickly.'

Forrest said he would be careful, and never gave another thought to his host's warning, though he was destined to be reminded of it very forcibly before the day was over.

Meanwhile he was experiencing the charming sensation of being 'at it' again which comes to every true fisherman when he once more feels the whippy suppleness of a rod in his hand and the delightful wash of the water against his waders. Sidney Forrest was essentially a fisherman to the backbone; he could persevere all day and enjoy it, even though the conditions, climatic or otherwise, were dead against his chances of success. And to-day he plodded on up the stream, cheerfully and untiringly, making beautiful long casts, now this side, now that, never neglecting a hole or run that could by any possibility hold a trout, until, on looking at his watch, he discovered it was past



HE WAS EXPERIENCING THE CHARMING SENSATION OF BEING 'AT IT' AGAIN

one o'clock, and the sole occupant of his creel was a trout of some five ounces. Evidently the landlord's prognostications were correct, and the wily trout was not to be lured from his retreat as long as the brightness of the day showed him the true nature of those innocent-looking little flies which floated past him so temptingly. So Forrest was fain to betake himself to a comfortably inviting grassy bank and eat his lunch, in the hopes that those gathering clouds would presently hide the sun, and bring on that rise which he was praying for so ardently.

The spot he had pitched upon commanded a full view of the river, which was here at its broadest. About a hundred yards further up it was girt about by steep and thickly wooded banks, and immediately between them the stream was divided into two by a small island, where a few willows grew, and forming on either side of it two very promising-looking stickles, which raced together deep under the overhanging banks in their haste to join company once more.

'There ought to be a good fish or two lying there,' thought Sidney Forrest as he hastily finished his sandwiches, took a long pull at his flask, and refilled his pipe. The clouds, by this time, had done their duty manfully, and the sky and sun were covered with them. Casting his eyes up the stream about twenty yards from where he stood, our fisherman observed something which gladdened his heart. This was the unmistakable signs of a big fish on the feed in a deep pool at the head of a short run. He immediately began to wade cautiously towards the spot, making one or two preliminary casts to wet his line. Soon he was within distance, and letting out a yard or two more line, he made a beautiful throw, and dropped his flies about five yards above the pool; the stream carried them over the exact spot; there was a swirl in the water, a sudden tightening of the line, and then the whirring rush of the reel told him that he was into a good fish at last. After a couple of frantic leaps out of the water the trout made straight across stream, and then began that period of uncertainty for the fisherman as to whether his tackle would hold or not.

Keeping as tight a strain on the line as he dared, Forrest cautiously waited till the trout had finished his rush, and then began slowly to reel up; he had brought his prey within ten yards of where he was standing, when with another determined effort the fish was off again, this time up stream, but the fight was beginning to tell, and, on reeling up again, Forrest could see the white belly of his quarry gleaming under the water; one or

two more short convulsive struggles and he began to unhook his landing net, then carefully bringing the now almost defunct fish to his feet, he quickly had the net under him, and waded to the bank. 'A pound and a half, if he is an ounce,' he murmured, as he took the hook out of the trout's mouth, gave him the *coup de grâce* on the butt of his rod, and slipped him into his creel.

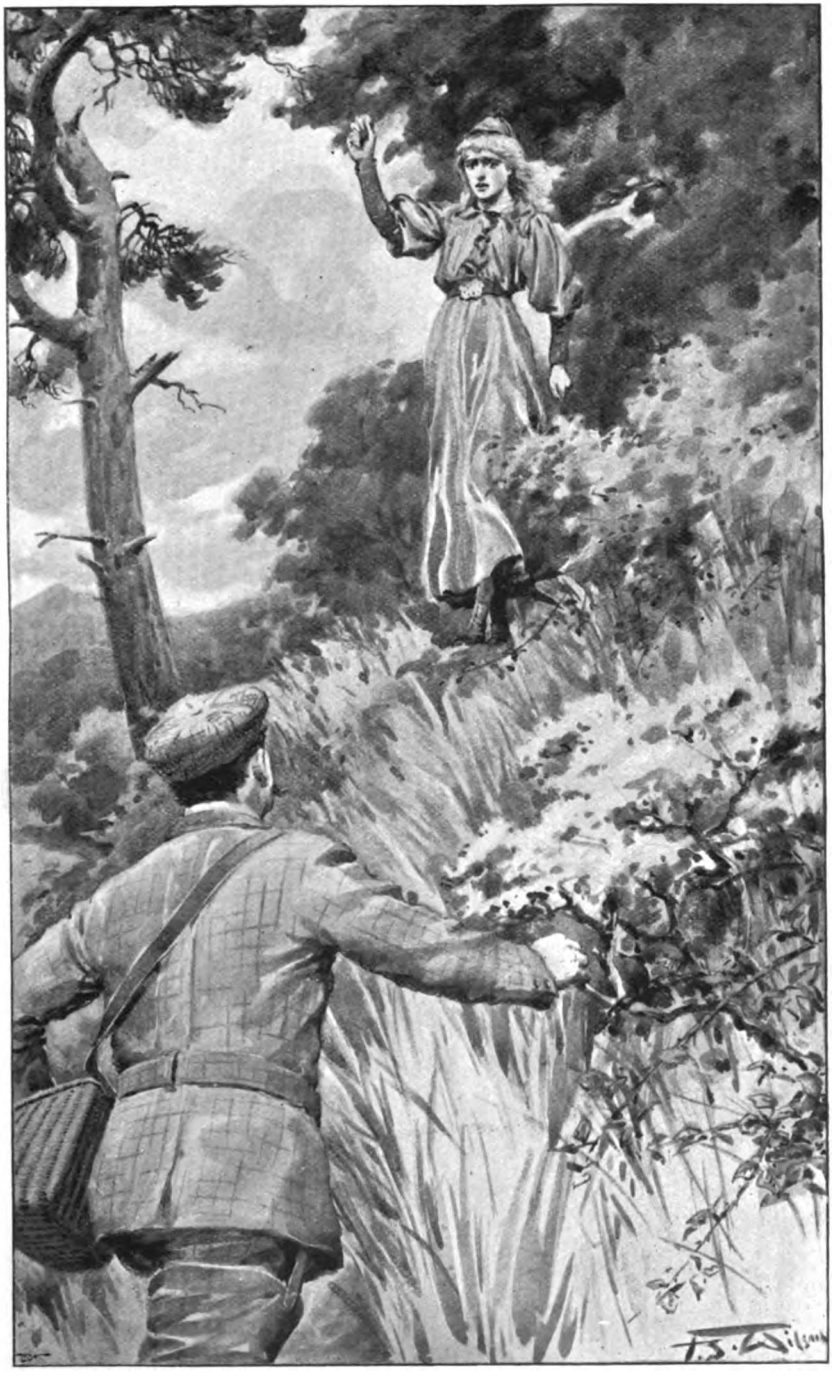
'Beast!' said a voice immediately above his head; and Forrest, looking up in surprise, caught sight of an exceedingly angry face glaring back at him from amid a shower of golden curls. The owner of the face was standing on an overhanging bank some twenty feet above his head. She was a young girl of about sixteen or seventeen, attired in a shabby pink cotton dress, with a still shabbier deer-stalking cap perched on the back of her head. That her features were not particularly beautiful, Forrest ascertained at the first glance, but her hair was undeniably lovely, and there was something about her whole attitude—though her animosity was unmistakable—which strangely attracted him.

'Beast!' she repeated deliberately. 'No!' she almost screamed as she stamped her foot, observing that he, with the first instinct of a gentleman, was about to salute her, 'I won't allow you to take your cap off to me. I saw you kill that poor fish, and I *hate* you!'—there was something very like a sob in her voice, but she went on—'and what is more, I don't intend that you shall catch another fish in this part of the river; it's mine here, and the trout are mine—do you hear?—mine, and I won't have them touched!'

'My dear young lady,' replied Forrest in a conciliatory voice, 'this is absurd; the fishing all along here belongs to the hotel, and I have a right——' He stopped abruptly to dodge a volley of sticks and stones which came showering about his devoted head.

'A right!' she cried scornfully. 'I'll soon show you whether you have a right or not.'

Forrest shrugged his shoulders and stepped into the stream; he was not going to give up his fishing to suit the whim of every ill-mannered schoolgirl he met; if she continued to annoy him he must find means to stop her, and yet he could not help admiring her persistent way. 'Confound it!' he muttered to himself as another volley churned up the water all round him. 'I must get further into the middle of the stream, where she can't reach me,' and, suiting the action to the word, he started



'I WILL THROW THIS STONE AT YOUR HEAD'

operations once more. But he had reckoned without his host, for the girl had evidently studied the art of throwing to some purpose, and, moving along the bank as he moved, she kept him very busy dodging her missiles, while, with unerring precision she dropped large rocks into each pool and run in which he cast his flies, every now and then breaking out into a scornful, irritating laugh as she saw how unavailing were his efforts.

It may not be surprising to hear that Forrest began to get very angry; it was more than flesh and blood could stand, to be followed every step by a virago of sixteen, to be kept in imminent danger of one's life, and to have all the best water spoilt just as the fish were beginning to rise.

'Hang it all!' he muttered angrily, as a large stone whizzed past his ear and missed his rod by half an inch, 'I must put a stop to this.' He waded to the bank, and, as he did so, the girl gave a triumphant laugh, ceased her furious cannonade, and stood expectant. Forrest carefully laid his rod and landing net on the ground; he had no definite idea as to what he was going to do, but he was determined to put a stop to this annoyance. There was a small rough path up the bank to where the girl stood, probably made by the inhabitants of the neighbouring farmhouse on their journeys to and fro for water. This path Forrest began to ascend. When he had reached halfway his steps were arrested by the voice of the girl, speaking slowly and deliberately. 'I told you,' she said, 'I would show you whether you had a right or not.'

'And I have come to tell *you*,' replied Forrest, 'that I am not going to stand being annoyed by you any longer. This fishing belongs to the hotel in which I am staying, and I have received the landlord's permission to fish all over his water, which extends for a couple of miles further up, and what is more, I intend to fish it.'

'And I say you shall *not*!' angrily replied the girl; 'and you may tell the landlord with my compliments that I shall prevent anyone harming the trout in this part of the river, especially when they are cruel brutes like you!' and so saying, she picked up a large stone and poised it menacingly in her right hand. Forrest, boiling with indignation, advanced two or three paces up the bank.

'If you come a step nearer,' said the girl, without moving, 'I will throw this stone at your head.'

Forrest paused for a second, then a bright thought struck him; making a feint, the stone flashed harmlessly past him, and

in another moment he had seized the girl in his arms and was carrying her swiftly down the bank. Not a cry did she utter, but with her small fists she beat a sounding tattoo on Forrest's head. It was only for a minute or two, however; for, stepping into the stream and wading as expeditiously as he could under the circumstances, he carried her to the island and deposited her gently among the willows; then, retracing his steps, he picked up his rod and landing net and said, 'I am going to fish up to the bend; if by that time you are prepared to promise that you will molest me no longer, I will take you back to the bank again.'

'You cad!' she hissed. 'I'd sooner die than promise you!'

Forrest shrugged his shoulders and went his way relentlessly. He was still smarting from her blows and her abuse, and he felt no compunction at leaving her imprisoned thus. But when he had whipped the stream for a quarter of an hour or so, thinking all the time far more of his adventure than of filling his basket, he began to wonder whether he had not been rather a brute, and to experience again that feeling of admiration for the girl who had so boldly championed the cause of her fish. However, he stuck to his word and fished up to the place he had mentioned, where the river took a sharp turn to the left. He had the satisfaction of landing two sizeable fish within full view of the island, but now in his altering frame of mind it seemed but a poor satisfaction after all. He would go back and say he was sorry—no, hang it all, he wouldn't say that; that would be admitting that he was in the wrong, when most decidedly it was the girl who —no! he would go back, as he had promised, and offer to carry her to the bank without any comment whatever, and if she still persisted in annoying him, well, he would just avoid her bit of the river in future—a nuisance, no doubt, but still better than having a series of pitched battles with a girl!

Good resolutions; but good resolutions, like German toys, are made to be broken at once. Forrest had not reckoned on that fractious temper of his getting the better of him again, and when the girl, in reply to his polite offer to convey her once more to the bank, had told him with redoubled energy that he was a *cad* and a *cruel beast*, that she would rather die where she was than allow him to touch her, and that if she ever got off the island she would not rest a moment until she had amply revenged herself upon him, he walked off again in high dudgeon, vowing that he would not lift a finger to help her, even though it meant her staying on the island all night, until she had apologised, or at any rate become more reasonable.

So Forrest whipped the unfortunate stream savagely for the next half-hour, taking no heed of certain ominous signs, such as dead sticks and branches of trees, which now and then floated

HE CARRIED HER TO THE ISLAND

past him, not knowing that in a few minutes he would be regretting in every fibre of his body each one of those steps, taken now so thoughtlessly, which increased the distance between him and the solitary occupant of the island.

He had arrived at the lower end of a long straight reach, which extended for considerably over a quarter of a mile. While in the act of testing the depth of the water in front of him with the butt-end of his landing net, a confused murmur reached his ears. Looking hastily up he saw at the extreme end of the reach something which for the moment made his heart stand still. It was only for a moment, and then the landlord's warning flashed across him, and ejaculating hoarsely, 'Great Heavens! the girl!' he made for the bank in great bounds, and casting away all his impedimenta, he raced across country, taking, as he hoped, a bee-line for the island. But waders and brogues are not, under the most favourable conditions, the best things in the world to run in, nor is a quarter of a mile much of a start when one is racing against a river coming down in a big spate; so it was little wonder that Sidney Forrest's heart sank within him, and that from time to time he cursed himself fiercely for forgetting the landlord's warning, and for straying so far away from the island. Nevertheless, he sped bravely on over the uneven ground, now crashing through a hedge, now scrambling over a loose stone wall, now tearing madly through a thick covert, heedless of rent clothes and scratched limbs, with the thought ever before him that the prize was a human life, for the safety of which he would be held responsible before God and man, until but a grass field remained between him and the bank, and with the coveted goal in view he put his foot into a rabbit hole and came heavily down. Truly the fates were against Sidney Forrest; for when he at length limped to the bank and peered anxiously over, it was to behold a black raging torrent sweeping madly past, tearing at the banks on either side, and leaving no trace of what was once an island, save a branch or two of willow showing intermittently above the seething waters. Not a sign of the girl was to be seen, and Forrest, groaning out 'Oh! my God!' threw himself on the grass in an agony of remorse; then starting wildly to his feet he made his way, as quickly as he could with a badly twisted ankle, down the bank, with his eyes ever sweeping the raging flood, not seeing what he dreaded, but always imagining that somewhere in front of him that relentless stream was carrying a poor, limp, helpless body, with long streaming hair, on its pitiless bosom to the sea.

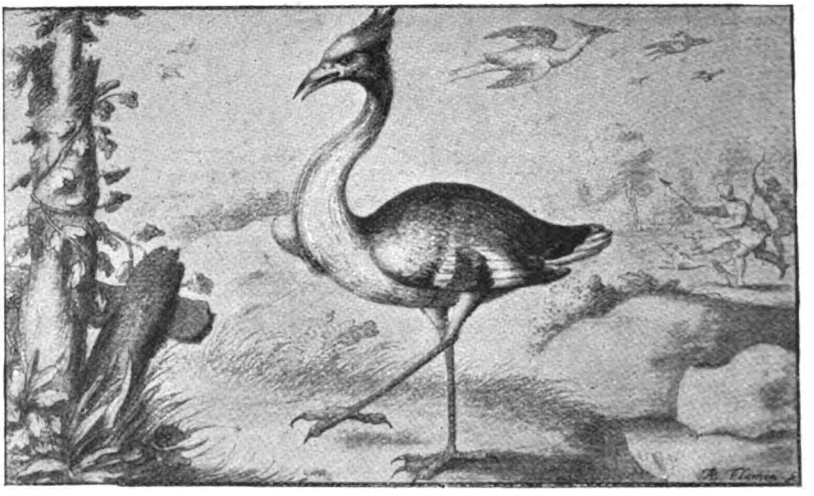
Presently he recognised the futility of going any further; he could not possibly save the poor girl now—she was lost—there was no doubt about that, and he was her murderer; not legally, of course, but morally; he would for ever after have to walk through life with this millstone round his neck. But now he

must find the girl's friends and tell them everything—tell them he had murdered her, and let them do with him as they thought fit; he would take all the blame, and welcome any punishment that was inflicted.

With these wild thoughts he picked himself up and began slowly to retrace his steps, keeping as much out of sight of the river as was possible—for it was hateful to him now—until he met a labourer returning from his day's work, who, evidently recognising his description of the girl, told him she was the daughter of the rector of a neighbouring village about a mile away, and pointed out to him the most direct route. This led Forrest almost straight back to the spot where he had first seen

On the Bosom of the relentless Stream

the flood coming down, and with a shudder he looked hastily round for his discarded fishing things; not seeing them at first, and supposing that he had cast them away further back, he was proceeding on his mournful errand when his eye was attracted by the white flutter of a piece of paper fixed on a stick in the ground; something made him examine it more closely, when, to his intense astonishment, he recognised the stick as part of the butt-end of his rod, while all around were strewn the remaining pieces. His new six-guinea trout rod had been smashed literally to a hundred bits, and yet with the slip of paper in his hand he uttered a loud 'Hurrah!' and threw his cap into the air, for on it was written in an unformed girlish hand, 'I told you I should have my revenge!'



SOLENT YACHT RACING

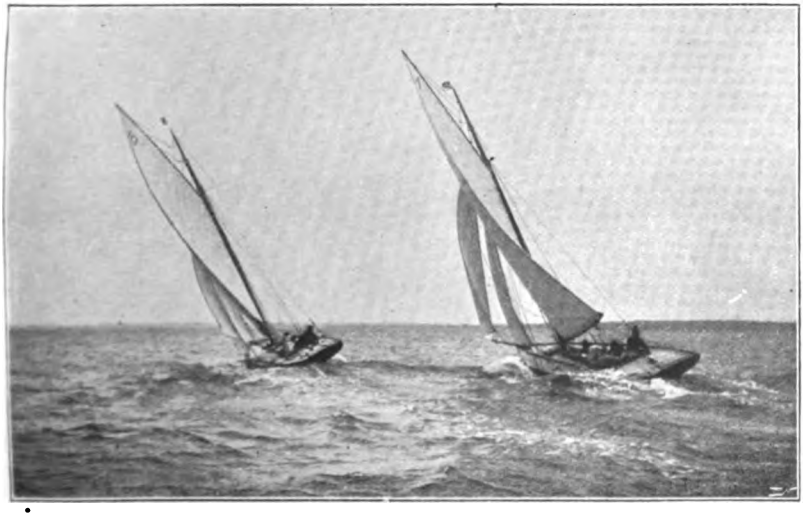
BY BARBARA HUGHES

PERHAPS there is no sport which has taken such a sudden jump into popularity as small-yacht racing on the Solent. Ten years ago such a thing had not been heard of. People would stare if you mentioned it; but they do so no longer now that Royalty has taken it up, and many of the best all-round sportsmen in England own these little boats and keenly enjoy sailing them. Lord Dunraven has done more to bring yacht racing before the world than anybody, and truly he deserves better luck than has followed him hitherto in his yachting career; for he is by no means a 'kid-glove' yachtsman, whose only share in the sport is the addition of his name to Lloyd's Yacht List and a new peak-cap in the Cowes week.

The gilded youth of the period consider it the smart thing to own a racing boat, on board of which in many cases they have never so much as put their foot. It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and some of their poorer brethren profit by this arrangement, as they get all the sport of sailing their friend's boat and none of the expense.

However, most of the owners come down in the Cowes week and dabble about in their little boats, apparently very happy.

Among the most amusing spectacles of the year are the 'single-handed' matches in 1-raters—they were especially so in 1895. Sometimes as many as eight of these intrepid amateurs, with highly starched collars and waxed moustaches, would start off gaily enough, like John Gilpin, and all agog to go through thick and thin. Many of them did not know the lee side from the weather; and the impromptu gybes, stern boards and false tacks they succeeded in making, were a wonder to behold! Needless to say, they were quite as dangerous to their competitors as they were to themselves, and it fairly made one's hair stand on end to see them all tearing along—'les yeux écarquillés, la bouche bayante'—towards the same mark, as by this time most of them were in a regular honest fright, and wishing a thousand times over that they had preferred discretion to valour. It usually seemed to blow a gale on the dates chosen for these exhibitions, and then of course everyone considered it *infra dig.* to postpone the match. So off they would go, to return very abject and defeated creatures, but brimming over with indignation and excuses about the incapacity of the *boat*! The skippers are not



'RUBY' 'SEA LARK'

at all partial to these displays of their 'governors'' prowess, as it takes them a good day's work to remedy the mischief—that is to say, disentangle the ropes, paint over the many scratches and dents, and generally restore order on the much-abused, refractory

boat. Various little bills also follow on the escapade—for damage to the pier, sinking of dingheys, and other destruction they had strewn in their path. Consequently there was not such a rush on these matches towards the end of the season; people usually found a pressing engagement elsewhere when Lord Harrington tried to get them up. That august institution, the Royal Yacht

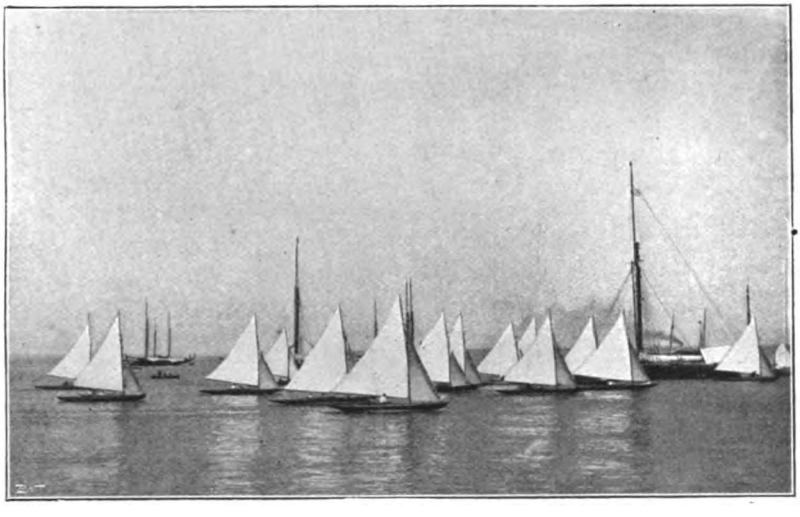
'VALERIA'

From photograph by DEBENHAM, Cowes.

Squadron, so far forgot itself one year (or was it two?) as to give matches for the smaller class. Certainly, however, one cannot complain of any scarcity of races or racing clubs on the Solent—in fact, the universal complaint is the plethora of both.

Not more than four races a week can be properly sailed by the same boat, but many sail more than this in August; in fact, I

have known individuals who have sailed as many as ten races a week, and three in one day. At the end of August, regattas are given at the little towns and places down the West Channel and on the Island, with a view to attract the racing fleet to the harbour; but their hospitalities are often dispensed in such an eccentric (to put it mildly) fashion, as only to make one repent having ventured so far. I remember once we sailed down to one of these rendezvous, and the officer of the day came alongside with hand-printed instructions, among other things saying 'All marks to be left to the starboard hand.' This, however, was scratched out, and '*Port* hand' written over the top and underlined. This entailed gybing all round the course, which of course we had to



ONE-RATERS OFF RYDE

do at imminent risk to life and limb, besides our competitors, who were mostly luffing round! At the finish we were told we 'might have known the instructions were a mistake, and certainly we could not have a prize, as we had sailed the course wrong.'

These implacable little clubs and regatta committees insist on coining their own code of racing rules, which, of course, are of the most primitive order. This year a deputation of racing men who went ashore at one of these places succeeded in dissolving the whole club. It came about through their filing a petition that the races should be sailed under Y.R.A. rules. This was curtly refused, with the result that all the racing men took their names off. As the club only consisted of the Commodores and

Secretary besides, these were left in undisputed possession of their deserted edifice.

They say the surest way to change a friend into an enemy is to race against him in the same class. Here is a case in point:—Mrs. B. to Mr. D.: 'Do get a 5-rater too, then we can all race together—such fun! all in the same class,' &c. &c. Mr. D. accordingly gets a very fast 5-rater, and they race 'neck and

'SILVA' (5-RATER)

neck' all through the season. At the end of it Mrs. B. and Mr. D. are dead cuts, and we look in the club blue book and find:—'Protest by Mr. D. against Mrs. B. for foul sailing: counter protest by Mrs. B. Evidence so conflicting it remains undecided!'

I think the funniest protest we ever had made against us was for not going about on the port tack when we were hard and fast ashore! Another was from a ½-rater when we were in a five.

We were going gaily along on the port tack, having ascertained, as we thought, that it was all clear, when we suddenly heard shouts from to leeward, and there was a tiny ½-rater coming straight for us! Of course we about ship immediately, pleading what was the truth, that we did not see them. This, however, only seemed to add insult to injury, and the proud owner of the

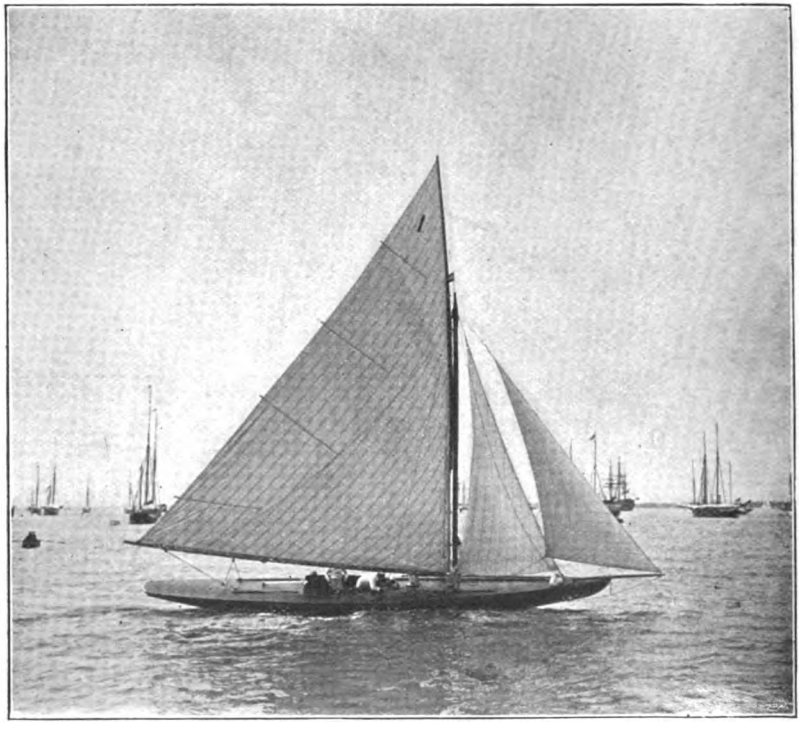
'COROLLA'

From a photograph by G. A. SCHENLEY

dignified ½-rater burst into anything but flattering language with regard to our eyesight. No doubt he would have done just the same if it had been the 'Valkyrie,' though I doubt if he would have persevered on his equitable course! The ½-raters now on the Solent can only be likened to a swarm of locusts, and the club officers and larger craft look upon them in much the same

spirit, I imagine, as the Egyptians did on that one of their afflictions.

There is no one to be pitied so much as the unfortunate officer of the day. This individual, in his efforts to please everyone, usually ends in pleasing no one. He has a hard day's work of the most fidgety and distracting nature, and a thankless one too, as it never occurs to anyone to thank him for the trouble he has taken in carrying out these amusements. Deciding protests



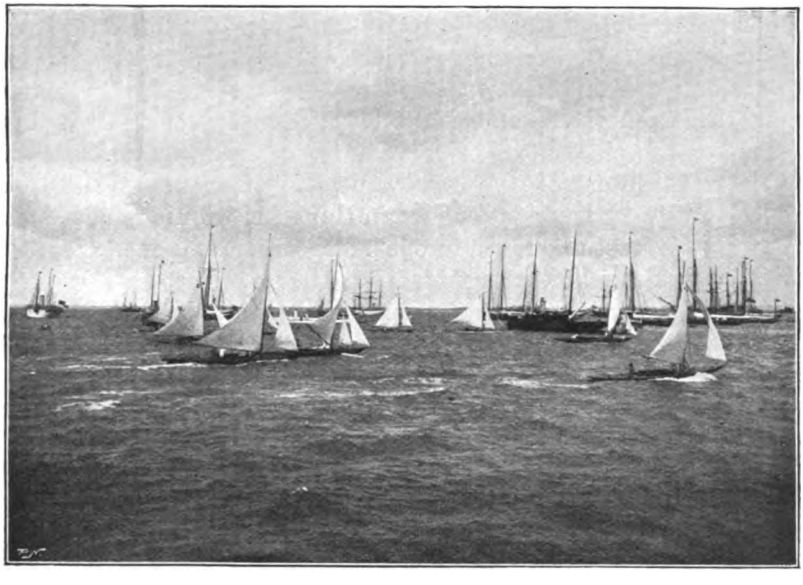
WINNER OF 'GENTLEWOMAN'S' PRIZE (2½-RATER)

also falls largely to his lot, and to deal with these satisfactorily is a moral impossibility, as the crew of every boat always swear in direct contradiction to each other, and witnesses usually refuse their evidence for fear of being dragged into the quarrel.

Last season every owner or sailing-master, or whoever took the helm, was obliged to sign a declaration, before he received a prize, stating that he had strictly adhered to the Y.R.A. rules during the match. This is an excellent idea, and should be regularly enforced by the clubs to ensure fair sailing. There are

many people who would put you about on the wrong tack, or something of that kind, in the heat of the fray, but who would hesitate to coolly sign a paper, when they came ashore, saying they had absolutely adhered to the rules. Another case is when a man sees his competitor hauling up to the anchor (which is a favourite dodge in light winds). He says, 'Oh well, if he is going to keg along, we may as well do the same;' but you would not find the latter signing the declaration afterwards.

Talking of drifting matches, reminds me of a certain race at Portsmouth a few years ago now. It was in the 2½ raters; after drifting about all day, darkness and fog overtook them, and



START OF 1-RATERS AT RYDE

they had some difficulty to pilot their way home. The last time A. caught sight of B. he was flat becalmed, about three miles astern, while A. was close up to the Spit, becalmed likewise. About half an hour later A. heard a very cheerful party approaching, to all appearances quite rapidly; there was loud singing, laughter, and racket going on, not entirely, however, quite disguising an occasional splish, splash of oars. A., recognising B.'s voice, calls out, 'Hullo, B.! How did you get here?' 'Same way as you did, I suppose,' was the retort. This fetched A., so, turning to his crew, he muttered, 'If it's a pulling match in, I guess we can do that as well as they can! Ship the

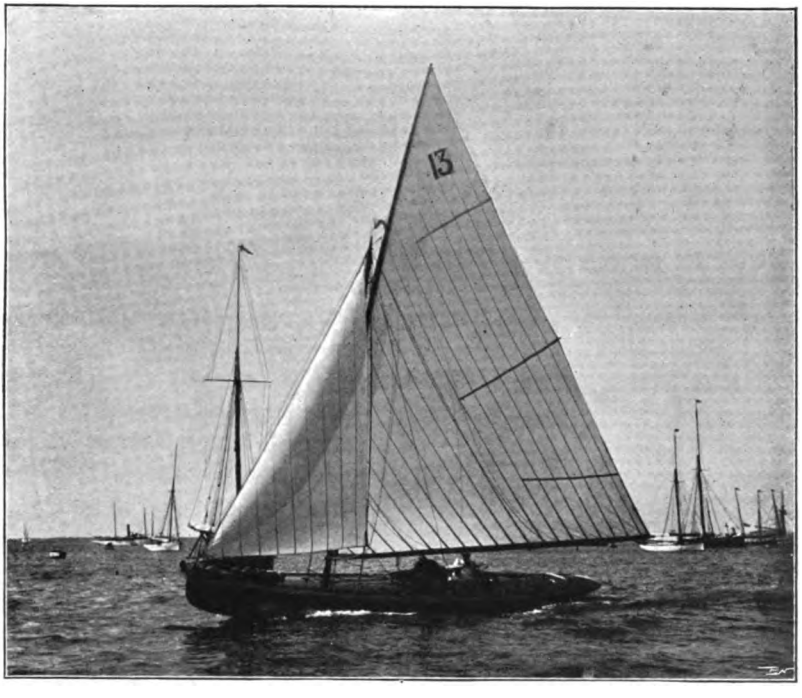
rowlocks.' So they both set to work and had a pulling match across the line, both keeping a respectful distance apart for fear they should hear each other's sweeps.

Be advised, and never take a 'long-shoreman' out racing in a small boat. The more well-meaning, the more trying these men always are. In their eagerness to be useful they seize the weather jib sheet and take about ten turns with it to windward; and when shouted at to let it go again, they hastily cast off the weather runner! Then they always seem to be sitting on everything that is wanted, and in their hurry to rise, get their feet hopelessly entangled in some momentous rope, from which it takes hours to extricate them. Added to these small eccentricities, they keep up a fire of silly questions, which it requires almost superhuman patience to answer civilly when you are sailing a losing race. Of course, if you are in the winning boat, these remarks assume a totally different aspect, and you discourse quite pleasantly, even volunteering information on all subjects of interest! Vanity, vanity, all is vanity, saith the preacher. Very true, but such vain things as winning or losing a race make a vast difference to one's disposition and feelings with regard to one's fellow-creatures.

Boats are just like human beings in their moods. Some days, for no accountable reason, they will not *move*. Everything, to all appearance, is just the same as usual—the breezes the boat usually likes, and all the elements propitious; but no, *she* has got the dumps, and refuses to wake up. This is most irritating! You try every dodge you can think of—slack the runners, peak, forestay, only to haul them in again; trim and retrim all your sheets; no, it is no good; no power on earth will get her along to-day. Even the greatest 'flyers' will take a day off like this sometimes, to the great disgust and mystification of their talented skippers.

I do not think that the type of little boats improves as the years go on. They are much faster off the wind, but I much doubt their windward qualities being improved, or whether they do their course relatively in shorter time than they did six years ago. It would be more than interesting if this latter point could be satisfactorily proved, though it would obviously be a very difficult thing to do, as the winds, tides, and even sizes of the boats would all have to be taken into consideration. However, it would be possible to find out the shortest time taken by 5-raters, say, on the same course during the last eight years. I cannot help thinking that the novel small-raters are very poor performers to windward, of course with exceptions. All good sportsmen and

designers agree that reaching and running are of small merit compared with going to windward, though not so efficacious in winning prizes on most courses. There is no pleasure in steering these great floundering dishes to windward—to leeward, rather—as they don't look within eight points of the wind. It was the greatest treat to steer the little 'Speedwell' last year, after the skimming-dish type. You could feel her edging and making up to windward the whole time, instead of ploughing along right off the wind, and seeming to fall off in the puffs rather than edging up. But as the



'SPEEDWELL' (1-RATER)

skimming-dish is faster on two points out of the three, she is more likely to win races; though this was not the case with the 'Speedwell,' as she was the largest prize-winner in the 1-rating class last season. Therefore we will hope this year the designers will favour us with more boats of her calibre. It is entirely due to the discomfort, expense, and unsaleableness of the present-day racers that the 'one-design class' was instituted. If we still could have boats of the 'Windfall Mynah' type, this want would not have been felt.

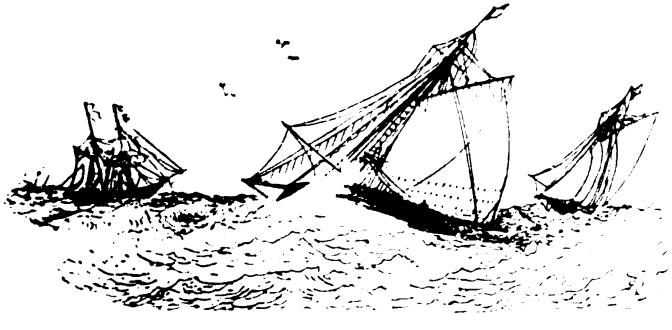
The one-design class certainly promises to be very popular again this year, in spite of its being such a regular wasps'-nest of dissension. They all watch each other like cats, for fear that one of them should take an extra 'shammy' on board without informing the whole class, so that they might all do the same. It certainly does not encourage orderliness or smartness on board, as the dirtier you keep the boat, the better they are all pleased;

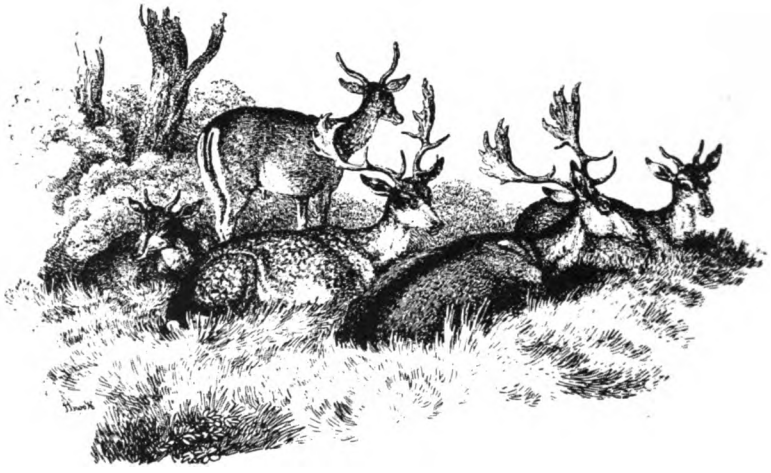
'White Rose'

and should you venture so much as to scrape the barnacles off your boat's bottom, they will all be down on you like a shot. It is very hard to know where to draw the line at this espionage, and it seems a pity that racing should have come to such a *cul-de-sac* as to make a one-design class necessary at all. All the same, I do not intend to underrate the many charms of our Solent raters. Their quickness on the helm and wonderful handiness is fascinating enough in itself. You can always be sure of their staying in

a sea-way, and, if properly handled, they will stop on the top of the water much longer than they are given credit for. I don't think the pleasure of steering a one-designer is to be compared for a moment to that of steering an out-and-out racer; and if I was given the choice of sailing twenty races in the latter to forty in a one-designer, I should unhesitatingly choose the former. If this rule brings in a type of boat like the 'Speedwell' or 'Edie,' which are able to beat the 'Flatfish' type, racing will take a new lease of life altogether; and the one-design, policeman class will very soon die a natural death on the Solent.

The 'White Rose,' of which a picture is given on p. 24, was a 1-rater built by Sibbick in five days for H.R.H. the Duke of York and the Hon. Derek Keppel. She was not such a success as had been hoped—a fact which her builder attributed to the hurry of putting her together. It *was* a wonderful feat, and nothing carried away or went out of order, indeed she showed as good a side as many boats which have taken ten times as long on the stocks. The 'White Rose' has passed from the hands of the Duke of York into those of his royal father, who keeps her on Virginia Water, and uses her when he goes for a sail on the hottest days of the season.





REMINISCENCES OF ALBANIAN SPORT

BY RANDOLPH LL. HODGSON

On February 16, 1895, T. and I, bound for a month's shooting trip in Albania, left Trieste in one of the big Austrian Lloyd steamers that start every Saturday for Corfu. We had a very stormy passage, and it was not till five o'clock on the Monday morning (six hours late) that we reached Brindisi. Up to then we had been a very small, and certainly motley, if not select, company—a Greek Church bishop, a Roman Catholic monk, and a huge Bavarian, were the only other passengers besides ourselves; but at Brindisi a party of some forty English and American tourists, intent on rushing round Greece, Palestine, and Egypt in the shortest possible space of time, came on board. The weather grew worse instead of better, and everyone on board was ill—except myself! It is a curious thing, but in every narrative of a voyage every person on board every ship except the writer, and possibly the captain, is always ill. This is a digression, however. Nine o'clock on the Monday night brought us to Corfu, and T. out of his berth (where he spent most of his time during the voyage). Landing in a small boat and in torrents of rain was not pleasant, but at last we found ourselves in our quarters at the Hôtel de St. Georges.

We had decided to make Corfu our headquarters. The place is too well known to need much description. The island itself,

with its dark masses of olives, cypress, and ilex, is charmingly picturesque; and the panorama that stretches below one, when standing on the citadel of the town of Corfu, is one of the most beautiful in Greece, if not in Europe—the shores of the island, extending in graceful curves on either hand, blue sky above and blue sea beneath, and, across the narrow channel that separates the island from the mainland, the snowclad mountains of Albania, rising tier upon tier as they fade away into the bluer distance.

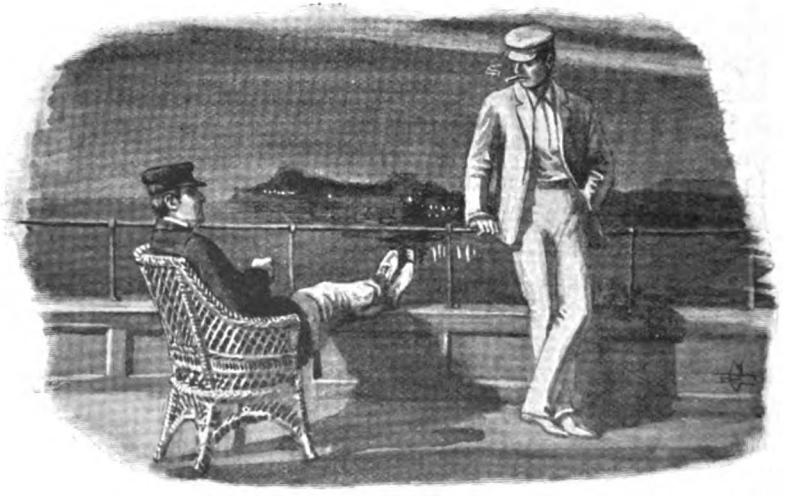
A yacht was the first necessity to be thought of. We hired one from an English firm, of which Mr. Charles Hancock is the managing partner, and this yacht we made our home for the next four weeks. She rejoiced in the name of the 'Wave,' and proved both comfortable and a good sea boat. We paid 50*l.* for her for the month; but a smaller yacht, to accommodate three persons besides the crew, may be secured for the same time for 30*l.* This payment did not include food. Living is cheap out there, however—our provision bill for the month came to 15*l.*—but we lived partly on what we shot. The hands on board numbered five: Christofero (nicknamed Columbus), the captain; Tony, the steward; Spero, the cook; a sailor, whose name I never knew; and last, but not least, Lorenzo Pappola, our beater. We paid the last-named ten shillings a day for his services—an expensive item in our accounts, but he deserved his money. Let me say here that a more civil, cheerful, obliging fellow I never met; and, what was even more to the point, he knew his work and the country thoroughly. All the crew spoke English more or less, Lorenzo very well. By descent they were all Italians. Lorenzo proudly informed us that he was a Neapolitan, though he had never seen his native town, as he called it, but was born and had lived all his life in Corfu. Two spaniels, 'Charlie' and 'Prince,' the property of Lorenzo, also accompanied us—good dogs, though a trifle wild. Our battery consisted of a 12-bore shot-gun each; and we each had a combination weapon, of Austrian manufacture, of which the right barrel was a ·450 Express, and the left could be used for either shot or ball. Most serviceable they proved.

There is no difficulty about obtaining permission to shoot in Albania. An application to the English Consul will, after some slight delay, owing to the red-tapeism of the Turkish authorities, result in a formidable-looking document with a gorgeous red seal. This is all that is required, with the exception of a licence to land firearms, which costs one franc.

Our first destination was Santa Quaranta, a little village some twenty miles northward from Corfu, situated in a bay in which

there is tolerable anchorage. It is one of the best places on the coast for woodcock.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of Thursday, February 21, we weighed anchor and started on our trip. It was a lovely evening: a cloudless sky, and the west one blaze of crimson glory, as the sun sank to rest behind the mountain of San Salvador. The sea grew rose-coloured in the light of the dying day, and as we sat on deck and listened to the gentle swish of the water, and watched the twinkling lights of Corfu, we congratulated ourselves on being in the 'Sunny South,' far away from the frost and snow of higher latitudes.



FAR FROM FROST AND SNOW

We made an early start the next morning. Our appearance created quite a stir in the village, and a crowd of picturesquely clothed Albanians met us as we landed on the little pier. Santa Quaranta possesses signs of former importance—ruins of imposing buildings of Venetian times stand here and there; but all it consists of now is a row of dirty tumbledown houses, standing on each side of a dirtier street paved with cobble-stones. We called on the Turkish official to present our documents. He was a young man, rather intelligent-looking, and very polite; but conversation with him was difficult, to say the least of it. French was the only language of which we possessed a mutual knowledge. T. is a good linguist, whilst I have never got far beyond the stage of 'Delille's Beginner's Own French Book,' but I am proud to say that I understood that Turk better than he did. We were obliged

to eat a villainous compound of roses, served in little glass dishes, with a glass of water. Most excellent coffee followed, and then cigarettes, made and *licked* by our friend the Turk ; but at last we managed to get away from him. We engaged a very good-looking Albanian to carry the luncheon-bag, and accompanied also by a gendarme, armed with a rifle longer than himself, set out for the haunts of the woodcock. A gendarme is attached to every shooting party, more as a matter of form than anything else, as the days of brigandage (in that part of the country, at least) are over ; but he comes in useful in keeping off the dogs—savage and ferocious brutes they are—that one meets with near every village. A walk of some three miles, along most infamously stony so-called paths, and across a swollen river, through which we had to wade waist-deep, as the bridge was broken down, brought us to a muddy plain, intersected by streams, the banks of which were clothed with tangled thickets, amounting in places to fair-sized woods.

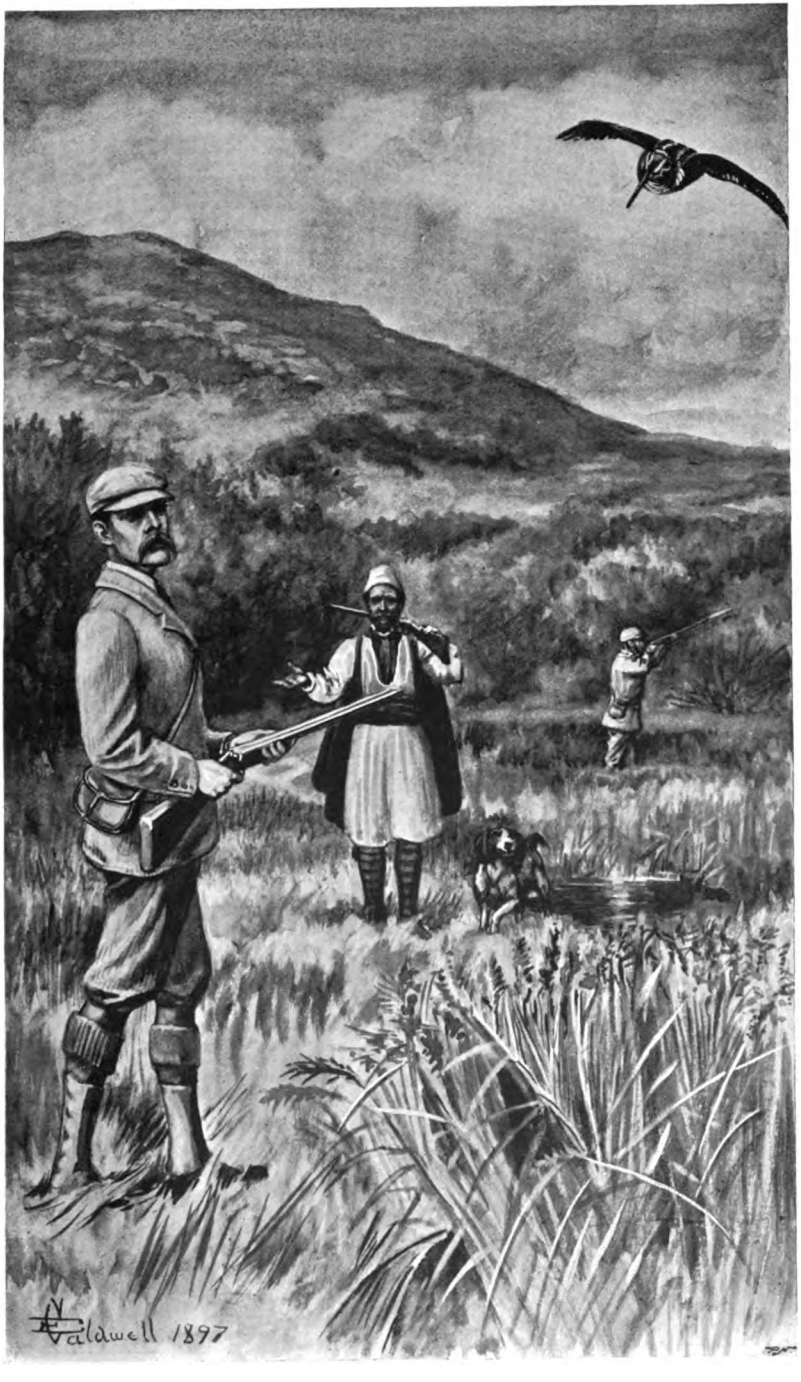
There is something strangely fascinating about the woodcock. In the first place, his plumage is so beautiful ; though sombre and quiet in colouring, the greys and browns are so artistically disposed as to make up a wonderfully effective whole. Then, his ways are so quaint—he so totally disregards all rules, and follows merely his own sweet will. Residents in Corfu have told me that the great woodcock years come about once in five years, but even in this respect there is no certainty. The season seems to make no difference either—one great year will be an intensely severe winter, the next may be equally mild. One fact is, however, firmly established, I fear ; *i.e.* that the woodcock are slowly but surely diminishing in numbers, and in the course of time will be pretty nearly exterminated. An Ishmael indeed is our little friend ; wherever he goes, and at whatever time of year, he is relentlessly shot at—happily, he is often missed ! That brings us to his flight ; and therein lies his principal charm, perhaps. He seems so easy to hit as he blunders up out of that briar-bush, with his 'child-like and bland' looking owlish flight. In the open, no doubt, he would be easy enough—but then, woodcock don't sit in the open. In the woods, as he comes twisting and turning through the branches—but there, the reader knows as much or more about it than I do. But what can excel the joys of a day's woodcock-shooting ? That particular day will always be a red-letter one to me—the splashing through the mud and slime, the struggling through the thorn-bushes, the shouts of Lorenzo as he cheered on the dogs, the welcome cry of 'Cock over !' and

the still more welcome *thud* as the beautiful bright-eyed bird fell lifeless to the ground. We did not make a great bag—twelve in all; but (let me confess it) we missed some. Altogether, there were not a great many birds; it was too late in the season, and the main body had migrated—somewhere.

We shot over the same ground the next day, but the night had made a great difference—there were only a few stragglers left. I don't think we saw more than half a dozen cock in all, of which I managed to secure three.

We sailed back to Corfu that evening, and spent the Sunday there. It was the last day of Carnival, and the town was very lively. Crowds of people filled the big piazza, and there was a grand procession of masqueraders in the afternoon. Everyone pelted everyone else with bonbons, T. and I doing great execution upon the moving mass of people below from our windows in the hotel. At *table d'hôte* we made the acquaintance of a young Scotchman and his mother, who were staying in our hotel. He had been shooting the previous week at another place on the Albanian coast, and had bagged a few woodcock, and a very fine wild boar. We soon struck up a friendship, and decided to join forces in future, and devote our attentions to pig. A little bay, called Triskoli, from the fact that there are three islands situated therein, was the scene of our first introduction to these gentry. From what I have seen of the Albanian wild boar he seems to be taller, lighter, and more active than his brother of Central Europe, better adapted for the rough hill-country that he haunts. In the hot weather he betakes himself to the mountains; but in the autumn he comes down to the dense scrub thickets that fringe the seashore and cover the low-lying land, and there remains through the winter. These covers are very thick, and it is with difficulty that the beaters force their way through them. The plan of campaign is very simple. The guns are placed on the edge of one of these covers, or, if the cover is large, on a convenient clearing or pathway, and the game is driven up to them.

But to return to our first day with the pig. We were four guns: D. (our new friend); C., a cousin of his, and a resident in Corfu; T., and myself. Lorenzo and Luigi (D.'s professional beater), with six or seven Albanians, did the beating, and 'Collio' placed the guns. 'Collio' was also an Albanian, a short, active man of about forty, with a bald head and rather a handsome face. He enjoyed the reputation of knowing the haunts and habits of the pig better than anyone else in that part of the country. He had a very limited supply of English—of which, however, he was



WE MISSED SOME

extremely proud—and he aired it on every possible occasion. Each Albanian brought his own dog—a sort of rough-coated sheepdog, and exactly like a wolf in appearance. They vary very much in colour, but the handsomest are certainly the white ones. They are very savage, and forcibly resent the approach of a stranger; an hour or two spent in their masters' company, however, convinces them that one is quite respectable, and after that they become perfectly friendly. As a rule they will not tackle a boar, though they bay him when wounded; and, unfortunately, they are quite useless on a blood-spoor.

The cover we beat first was a long strip close to the sea, and bounded on the inland side by a high, precipitous cliff. T. was perched on the cliff, I was next to the sea, and D. and C. were posted between us. From the first moment of our introduction Collio attached himself to me, and always sat by me at my post, silent, motionless, watchful, and continually rolling and smoking cigarettes.

After a wait of half an hour or so the shouts of the beaters were faintly borne to our ears on the breeze, and then the barking of dogs warned us that something was on foot.

'Pig! Come on, Effendi,' whispered Collio.

A minute or two, that seem like hours, pass, and then an occasional snap of a stick and a heavy grunting breathing show that the pig is bearing down straight on to us. C. fires a useless shot at the moving brushwood, which alters Piggy's course, and next moment a great black, bristling boar comes into view, crashing through the cover some forty yards on my right. I have time to notice his appearance—seemingly all head—and his curious rocking-horse-like gallop, before firing. He answers my shot with an angry grunt, and then dives out of sight into a woody ravine. I fire my second barrel as he emerges on the opposite side, and he rolls head over heels, only to get up again and go on, however.

'Bravo, seignior! Pig *morto*!' exclaims Collio.

But that pig was far from being *morto*! We followed his tracks—great splashes of blood marked them for some distance—for more than an hour, till we finally lost them on some stony ground; then we beat the cover towards which he seemed to be heading, and the cover he had left, but we saw him no more.

I regret to say that it was not till some days afterwards that some Albanians found him, still living, and put an end to his misery. My first shot had completely shattered his under jaw; the second had broken a hind leg, and raked forward through

his ribs. Altogether, a good big boar seems to be as difficult an animal to kill as there is; a shot through the heart is the only thing that will stop him on the spot.

We had no luck in the afternoon, and the next day only saw one pig, which D. wounded and lost. The next two days were blank, but Saturday, March 2, was one of the best days we had. C. had been obliged to return to Corfu, but we had been reinforced by the arrival of Hancock and R., so numbered five guns. We shot over a tract of country that Lorenzo called 'the Monastery,' from the fact that an old ruined building of that ilk stood on a hill in the centre of it.

The weather had been very unsettled, but Saturday morning broke bright and clear, and the Albanian mountains, with their snow-capped summits, stood out cold and white against the blue of a cloudless sky. Our first beat was a promontory that ran out into the sea; and as I sat on a rock on the extreme right of the line of guns, with Collio, calm and impassive as ever, beside me, and looked down into the depths of the clear blue water, that broke in little wavelets on the shore a hundred feet below us, I felt it was a pleasure to be alive. But the beaters are visible on the opposite hill, there is a short, sharp bark from one of the dogs, and it is time to forget the beauty of the scenery and the fineness of the morning, and answer to the 'Look-out' that Lorenzo sends across to us with all the strength of his lungs.

'Grando pig! Come on, Effendi,' hisses out Collio, and we rush over the sharp rocks to cut off the retreat of a huge boar that looms up, big as a donkey, before us.

'Crack!' and the thud of the bullet follows. 'Crack!' again, and one of his forelegs is swinging uselessly in the air, broken at the shoulder.

Two dogs are close on him, and he cannot face the hill with his broken foreleg, so he crashes back into the thick cover again as Hancock fires both barrels at him.

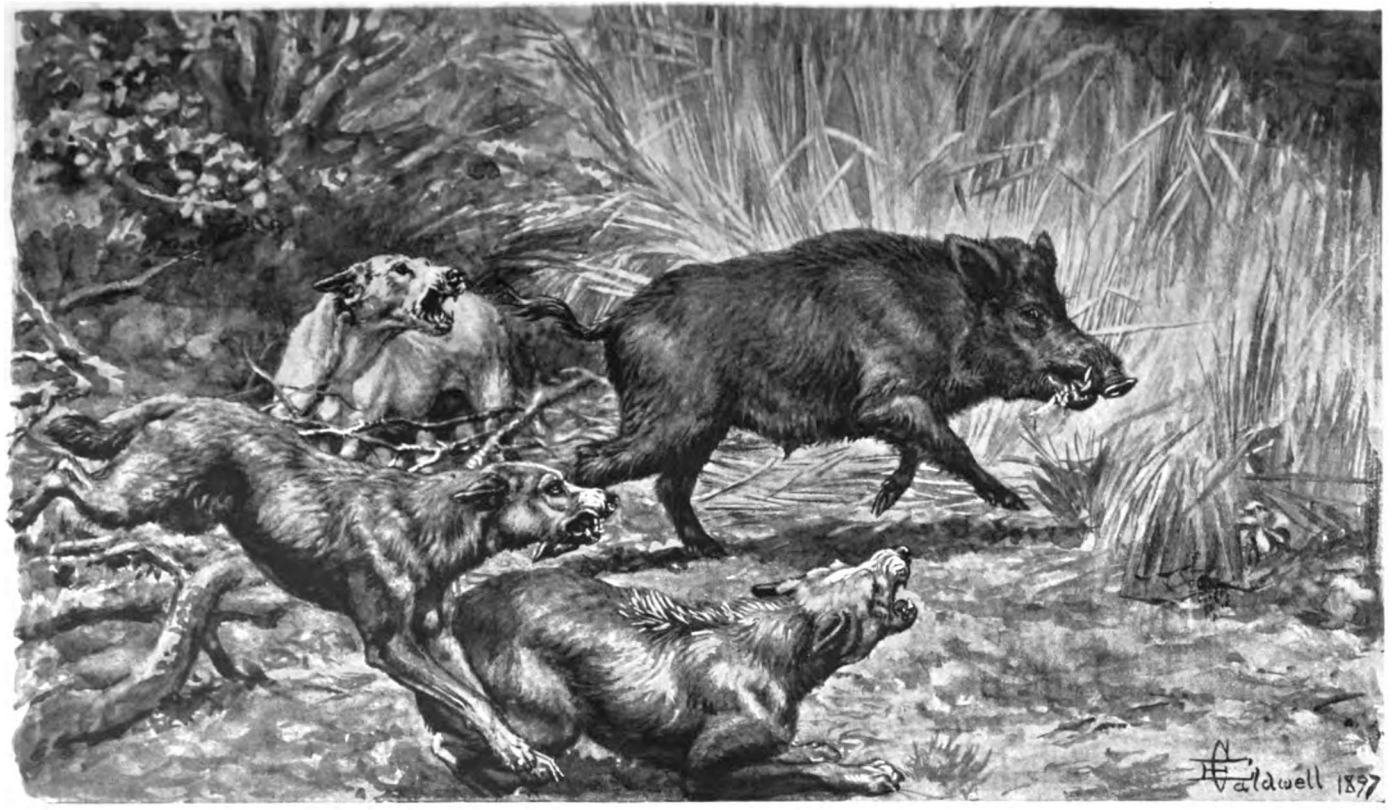
He is standing at bay now, with all the dogs round him, turning and twisting, with foaming tusks and an angry gleam in his little wicked eye, as he tries to get rid of his canine enemies. One cannot shoot for fear of killing a dog.

He shakes himself free, and moves on again.

Hancock has reloaded, and comes plunging through the thorn-bushes to be in at the death. The boar sees him, and gathers himself together for one last charge.

'Bang!' but he doesn't stop.

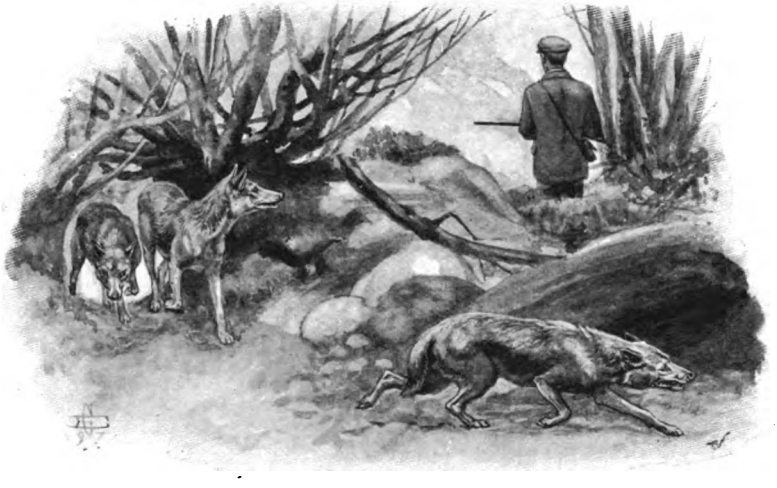
'Bang!' That bullet has reached his brain, and he lies dead *one yard* from Hancock's feet.



HE SHAKES HIMSELF FREE AND MOVES ON

The other guns and the beaters come up, and there is great rejoicing over the grim, grey carcase. He was a gallant old boar, and had fought bravely to the last; his head looks down on me now as I write.

One of the dogs had a nasty gash in the throat, but some brandy poured into the wound stopped the bleeding, and he soon recovered. This was the best dog we had—we called him 'the Warrior;' in fact, he was the only one that would seize a boar. An Albanian values no possession so highly as his dog, so in case of a bay it is important to get to the place as quickly as possible; a dog killed would cause trouble, and his loss would have to be made good. It is rather curious that Albanian wild boars very



THREE JACKALS STEAL PAST

seldom charge, even when wounded; and the Albanians follow them up without the slightest concern or fear.

The big boar was a glorious beginning to our day, and our good fortune continued. The second drive was a blank, and we got nothing in the next; but two roebuck broke back through the beaters, and I had the pleasure of seeing three jackals steal close past D. It was very interesting to observe the careful way in which they slunk noiselessly along, reconnoitring from behind every bush—with such success, too, that though they all passed within twenty yards of D., he never saw them, despite my frantic gesticulations.

The next beat was a long one, and we had nearly an hour to

wait. I was again on the extreme right, with D. next me. I had heard absolutely nothing, not even a shout from the distant beaters, when Collio, who had been apparently dozing, suddenly sat up, and said, 'Pig! Come on, Effendi.' Two or three minutes passed before I could see or hear anything, but then two three-quarter-grown pigs appeared, making straight for us. The first swerved, and raced past D., who had a difficult snap-shot at it, just as the second rushed by on my right. I fired both barrels, with no apparent success, and Collio's face was a study.

'Pig no *morto*,' he said, and he appeared to be on the verge of bursting into tears.

However, when the beaters came up, and I suggested that he should go and look for blood, a triumphant shout from him announced that he had found, not blood, but the pig, stone-dead. It was shot through the heart, but had run on for more than fifty yards, and out of our sight, before falling.

After lunch we had a long walk over very bad ground to get to our positions for the next cover.

It held a plentiful supply of game, as T. emptied his four barrels unavailingly at a 'sounder' of half-grown pigs, and D. shot another small boar.

We formed quite a triumphal procession back to the yachts that evening with our three pigs.

We spent the Sunday and Monday in Corfu; and D. and I went after snipe on the Tuesday, as T. had stayed behind in Corfu for a dinner-party at the Empress of Austria's palace.

The Empress spends some time there every spring, but is very seldom seen by anyone. Her days are mostly spent in taking long solitary walks. I met her once. There is no mistaking the tall stately figure—slender and graceful as that of a girl of eighteen, despite her sixty years—though she kept her face hidden behind the black fan that she always carries.

T. and Hancock ought to have joined us on the Wednesday morning, but they failed to put in an appearance, so D. and I had another day alone. We shot that week at a more inland place called Aràpi, and to get to it had a long row across the Butrinto lake. Our Albanians camped out there instead of going backwards and forwards. Their hardihood is extraordinary: a fire, seemingly in the most exposed place they can find, round which they lie, wrapped in their goatskin cloaks, is all they require for their night's rest. Bread and water is their food and drink, though Collio did not d[illegible] a nip of our whisky.

We only saw one pig on the Wednesday, and he gave us a wide berth; but I shot a roe-doe at 130 yards.

Hancock and T. turned up on the Thursday morning (the fleshpots of Corfu had proved too strong an attraction for T. to tear himself away the preceding day), and we shot over the 'big cover,' as Lorenzo called it. There were a great many 'pig'—the beaters saw twenty-two during the day—but for the most part they broke back; however, T. shot a fair boar (his first), and I knocked over an old sow. I also missed a wild cat—a great grief to me at the time, though I tried to comfort myself with the reflection that an Express rifle is not the best weapon to use for a running cat. I was fated to meet with that cat again!

Friday was the most miserable day imaginable—it poured with rain from morning till night—and we saw absolutely nothing.

Saturday was a better day with regard to weather, but we had poor sport; all the 'pig' broke back, and the total bag consisted of a roebuck, that D. killed with a bullet through the heart as it tore past him—a wonderfully good shot.

It is very important to always drive 'pig' down wind. There is an old German fable, spoken of in one of the volumes of that excellent series, 'The Badminton Library,' that relates how, when a hair blew from the head of the hunter the red deer *heard* it, the chamois *saw* it, and the wild boar *smelt* it; and I myself have seen two 'pig' stand like pointers a quarter of a mile from the guns, and, having satisfied themselves that the air *was* tainted by the presence of man, turn tail and bolt back into cover; and the united efforts of beaters and dogs could not force them again in the right (or, in their opinion, the *wrong*) direction.

We again spent the Sunday in Corfu, and took leave of our friends the D.'s, who were obliged to return home. T. and I shot all the week, but we were clean out of luck, and saw next to nothing. The weather was becoming very hot, and as the 'pig' seemed to be making for the mountains in consequence, we determined to strike still further inland the following week.

The Wednesday morning found us beating some small covers on the bank of a river, and, after two or three unsuccessful drives, T. shot a half-grown boar. There was a rather curious incident in connection with it. Two 'pig' passed between T. and myself, and T. fired at one of them, and apparently missed it, but the boar dropped dead to my shot. On going up to it we found, however, that *both* balls had pierced its heart, and the tracks of the bullets had crossed one another in the form of a letter X.

At lunch-time a shepherd came up and told us that four 'pig' were accustomed to haunt a small gully halfway up a neighbouring mountain; so we decided to try it, though we felt somewhat unbelieving. It was a stiff climb up, and when we reached the place there seemed hardly cover enough to shelter a hare, much less a pig. However, the shepherd was right, for no sooner had the beaters got round, and begun their advance, than a fine boar passed close by T., who killed him with a single shot in the neck. The next moment a second one jumped up from the shade

HER LAST LOOK

of a thorn-bush. He was above me, and though he fell to my shot, he picked himself up, and charged straight down the hill at me. But 'the Warrior' was close behind him, and, pinning him by the ear, bore him to the ground. The bullet, too, had done its work, and the second ball I gave him was hardly necessary. A third pig broke back through the beaters without our getting a shot at it; but the fourth one was not at home.

We found quite a crowd of Albanians in the valley at the foot of the mountain, who had been watching the battle from afar. They were very eager to see our rifles, so we exhibited them, amid loud murmurs of admiration. One old fellow wanted

to *try* mine, but I was short of cartridges, so I drew the line at that.

It was hard work to convey our spoils back to the lake. We tried to hire a horse from the Albanians to carry them; but they are Mahomedans in that part of the country, and would not allow even a horse of theirs to be defiled by contact with an accursed pig! At last by liberal payment we prevailed on two of them to help our beaters to carry the 'pig' slung on poles, on the understanding that they were only to handle the poles, and not the carcases.

The next day was our last in Albania, and we shot the 'big cover' again. T. and I each wounded and lost a boar; but I killed a roebuck with a rather good head, and, what was still more satisfactory, bagged the wild cat.

I was posted at the corner of a lake, and by the side of a little stream that ran into it—exactly the same place where I had previously seen her—and thinking it possible that she might show herself again, I slipped a shot-cartridge into the right barrel of my gun.

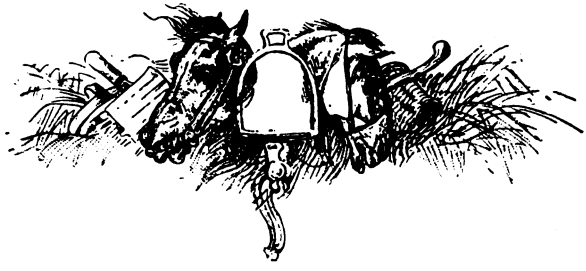
A wait of a few minutes, and then —— What is that tawny yellowish thing that comes slinking along so quietly?

It is—the *cat!*

She trots along till she reaches an open spot, and then stands still, and looks at me. Poor pussy! It is her last look at anything. A report, and when the smoke clears I see my victim stretched out—dead!

We rowed down the Butrinto River at sunset to where our yacht lay anchored—lay like some black spectre on a sea of molten gold. And as we looked back at the little knot of Albanians, who waved us a last farewell, we felt that in these rough men—rough as the hillsides of their own land—we were leaving behind us, not the mere acquaintances of everyday life, but tried and trusty *friends*.

And so, with a sigh of regret, we left Albania.



FREDERICK ARCHER

BY GODFREY BOSVILE

SEVERAL years have elapsed since this wonderful jockey, in shattered health, groped for a revolver within his reach, and, pulling the trigger, terminated one of the most extraordinary careers that has ever been connected with Turf history.

Yet, strangely enough, the appalling suddenness of his awful end seemed in perfect harmony with his fearless, overbearing disposition. To die when quite young, with his name still fresh upon all lips, to leave in his prime the racecourse he loved so well, and to pass away into the unknown, was the self-chosen fate of an almost ideal horseman.

The leading characteristics of this famous jockey were an indomitable will, and courage developed in so marked a degree, that had he chosen a different calling, it is probable that he would have been equally successful as a leader of men.

When in repose, Archer's striking face had a dreamy expression, but no sooner did his strong well-shaped hands feel the touch of the reins than a curiously earnest look crept over the corners of his mouth, his brow wrinkled into a frown, and his eyes lit up with ill-suppressed excitement. The superhuman energy so prominent in the deceased jockey was indicated in every curve and attitude of his lithe and beautifully proportioned figure. Probably no horseman ever got into the saddle who had more perfectly shaped legs for riding; they were long, thin, and straightly put on, but not in the least bowed; he was tall and slight. In colours he was so spick-and-span that he narrowly escaped being a dandy; his racing cap and jacket were most carefully arranged, and his irreproachable breeches and neat top-boots fitted faultlessly.

Fred Archer was the chief exponent of nigger-driving jockeyship. When racing he gave the impression of being chronically on the alert, whilst he communicated his own lightning quickness

to whatsoever horse he rode. He may be said to have forced the very maximum exertion out of every mount. For the moment he seemed to inspire his horse with his own determination, riding energetically every yard of the way, and finishing in a marvellous style with the most brilliant dash.

He was scarcely ever shut in, and had no scruples whatsoever about putting anyone over the rails who got in his way, neither giving nor expecting to receive any quarter. From choice he preferred waiting on his opponents to making the pace, and was in the habit of coming up on the rails, like a whirlwind, catching the leading horses in the last few strides, and making a close finish amidst breathless interest. This extraordinary jockey was quicker at getting away than any amateur or professional in the annals of racing. Directly the flag fell he always gained something, an advantage he often maintained to the end when the distance was five furlongs. He loved riding any sort of race; whether Derby winner or 'selling plater,' in his iron grip it was coaxed, or more likely punished, until he got it home, ridden hard the whole way through with good judgment. The profound contempt he appeared to hold his fellow-creatures in was not entirely unprovoked. If 'Archer was up' on a complete outsider, whose previous performance showed inferior form, it did not prevent the public from backing the idol; it was the jockey they depended on, *not* the horse, and the price shortened in a most amazing manner. Love of applause, concealed from the outer world by the careless look on his face, a wounded vanity, and a most violent temper, often gave rise to exhibitions of unnecessary severity. 'Archer wins!' or 'Archer's beat!' might be heard all over the densely packed stands. Then the great jockey would be seen coming up the straight, sitting down in his saddle, spurring and thrashing a beaten horse, the loud cracks resounding yet again and again even after the winning post had been passed.

But those head finishes! Ah, how different was the scene when the finest horseman in the world had a mount worthy of his genius—for he had genius! When every inch was disputed by jockeys who were his equals in many respects, when a mass of bright silk, white breeches, and glossy thoroughbreds rounded Tattenham Corner 'all of a heap,' and Archer, hugging the white rails from start to finish as was his wont, suddenly shot out of the Derby group, amidst yells for the favourite, which lasted until the numbers went up and the 'all right' was called. Oh! those days when racing was the finest of the fine arts; long will they be remembered, never will they be seen again; for Archer is dead.

Yet he had worthy rivals; a Tom Cannon, a Wood, a Fordham, and an Osborne, were all foemen worthy of his steel. Still, when we recall the palmiest days of flat racing, Archer's head victories, and his untimely death, we must not overlook the dozens of horses whose hearts were broken in his desperate finishes. But, in spite of all, his fame is imperishable, and the efforts of an Anti-Gambling League will never erase the name of Fred Archer from sporting literature, or lower his reputation, for he was indeed the Napoleon of the Turf.

His hands, most judges agreed, were inferior to Tom Cannon's, especially on a two-year-old, but his unrivalled success may safely be attributed to his energy, will, and distribution of weight. He varied his seat according to the nature of the ground, riding on his horse's withers on the level, and leaning back in the saddle whilst he rattled down inclines; easing slightly uphill, and finally gathering himself and his horse together, in order to make one of his superhuman efforts in those exciting finishes with which his name has so often been associated. But his ungovernable temper was vented in a thousand different ways. He achieved the highest feats of horsemanship by temporarily subduing every feeling in order to win his race, but on returning to the paddock the pent-up passions often had their reaction. Nearly all connected with him were frightened by his explosions of wrath and cruel biting words. Many jockeys, trainers, and even owners quailed before his overbearing manner and supercilious airs.

In everyday dress he did not affect the horsey style, but his clothes were exceptionally well cut, and his tie neatly arranged. Archer's restless spirit yearned after excitement; only for a few moments was he capable of controlling his fierce passions, and his high-strung nature found an outlet in physical deeds of daring.

In the zenith of his fame no day was too long for him, or no feat that is possible in a flat race too difficult for him to accomplish. He hated pedestrian exercise, was most abstemious in his use of alcohol, and we may safely aver that the only fear he experienced was the dread of his ever increasing weight. Away from a racecourse he grew gloomy and despondent, whilst the dreamy, almost pensive, eyes seemed to betoken a prophetic knowledge of a violent death.

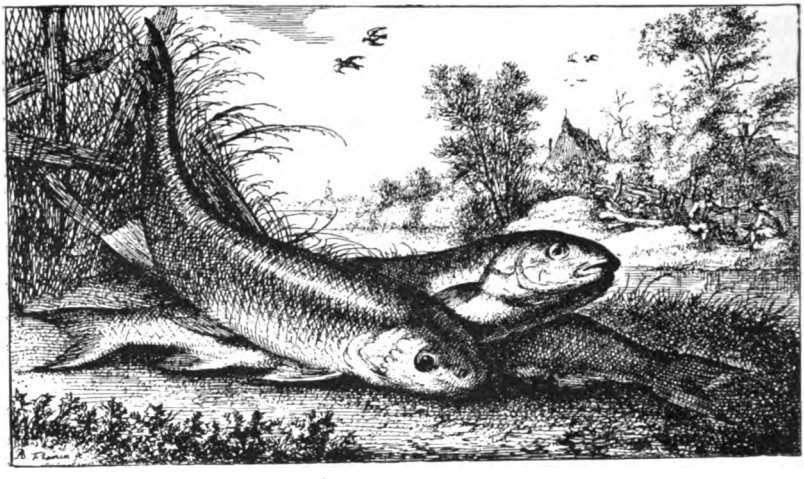
His face was swarthy for an Englishman; he walked with a stoop, and when riding hunched his back more than most jockeys; whilst his general appearance was that of a delicate man, who scorned yet had grown accustomed to public flattery. There have been many conjectures as to how good Fred Archer really

was, and few questions could be more difficult to answer. On a three-year-old, or aged horse, he was probably about two pounds better than any jockey of the past or present generation, his lightning starts giving him especial advantage in five-furlong races. Tom Cannon was his equal, however, and many consider his superior, on a two-year-old. Though the name of Fred Archer has been associated with brilliant finishes, his victories were more frequently due to his knack in 'getting off' directly the flag dropped; whilst his notorious disregard for his fellow-jockeys made weaker horsemen give way to him, and 'the Tinman,' seizing his opportunity, turned what might otherwise have been a defeat into a well-ridden victory.

The late Lord Falmouth had first call on his services, and the nickname of 'the Tinman' originated from the mines on his patron's Cornish estate. Archer's love of courting danger often made him foolhardy. He delighted in rattling up to a jump without taking the trouble to even steady his horse, and not infrequently his hunters or hacks would turn a complete somersault. But quite undismayed, the jockey would remount and gallop wildly on, sometimes spilling himself and his horse at three consecutive fences.

Towards the close of his career he lost several races through sheer weakness. Turkish baths, large doses of medicine, and diet insufficient to support his frame, played sad havoc with his constitution. In spite of the large fortune he had amassed, which he seemed incapable of enjoying, his life was a misery to him, for he had reduced himself to a living skeleton; but he was temperate in his habits, and an early riser to the last, and passionately fond of riding gallops.

Though education and different pursuits make poet and soldier differ from the wearer of silk on a flat racecourse, nevertheless there are points of resemblance between Archer and Clive, whose end was similar; and there was even a certain affinity between this ideal jockey and the satirical Byron, both delighting to dazzle the world, and ride roughshod over its feelings. Archer may have been a freak of nature, but he unquestionably possessed enormous individuality and high gifts.



THE MONSTER FISH

A MYSTERY OF LAKE FAEMUND

BY CAPTAIN GERARD FERRAND

'So you really believe that some kind of monster fish exists in this lake, do you?' I asked.

'Oh, yes,' answered the elder of the two boatmen; 'it is quite certain there is such a fish, for my comrade here and I have both seen it.'

'How big was it?' said I.

'It is very difficult to judge, as we didn't see the whole of it at one time, so we couldn't reckon how much there was under water; but we saw the greater part of the length above water.'

'And, pray, how much might that have been?' I asked.

'As long or longer than the longest oar we have in the boat,' he replied.

'Come, now,' I protested, 'you don't seriously expect me to believe there are fish in this lake nine or ten feet in length, and, moreover, that you two men have had the luck to see one of them?'

'Well,' responded the first speaker, 'I don't say there are many such fish, but that we two saw a fish of some kind unknown to anyone hereabouts, and of several feet in length, is as certain as that there is water in Faemund Sjöen.'

By this time I was becoming interested in the men's assertions, and realised the fact that it was a sore subject with them, as they had evidently been exposed to more or less ridicule from their neighbours for their belief in the existence of this monster. So I proceeded to interrogate the elder man. 'Was it a big lake trout (Sjö Orret) you saw?'

'Oh, no! a lake trout was not the fish we saw. The largest we ever heard of, which was caught in this lake, was under 40 lbs.'

'Why, of course, it was a gigantic pike,' I said.

'Not at all,' he replied quickly; 'for though a large pike has been caught in this lake weighing 112 lbs., it was different in appearance, and would swim quite differently from the fish we saw, which must have been two or three hundred pounds in weight.'

I could not help smiling incredulously, though I noted that my informant was quite in earnest about his big fish.

'Well, now,' said I, after considering the subject, 'I think I have a clue to the kind of fish you saw; you say it was a very long fish, and swam differently to a trout or a pike?'

'Yes, that is true,' replied both at once.

'Well, then,' said I, 'it must have been an overgrown "lake" (pronounced larker, *Lota vulgaris*, English "eelpout" or "burbolt"); they have been known to attain the weight of 30 lbs., and a fish of that weight would be probably nearly five feet in length, and would correspond to the fish you saw.'

'No,' the man replied earnestly, 'it was not a "lake," for it had a greenish body, and a "lake" is dark brown and yellow spotted. We know what a "lake" is like, for we have caught scores under the ice in winter, some up to 8 or 10 lbs., and no doubt we haven't caught the biggest; but we have never before or since seen a fish like the one we saw that summer evening.'

The conversation then flagged for a time, and we sat buried in thought looking into the burning logs of our camp fire. I then offered each of them a glass of aquavit, thinking it probable I should presently hear of some gigantic land animal—elk or bear, possibly. When they had emptied their glasses, the other man, who had joined very little in the conversation, except for the purpose of backing up his friend's assertions, asked if it were possible that there might be a kind of 'Sjö-kraken,' or 'Sjö-orm' (lake-kraken, or lake-serpent), still existing in a large and little known lake like Faemund, being a survival from the olden times.

At this question, which was put in a ludicrously serious manner, my Norwegian servant burst out laughing; but I checked him, as I could see it irritated our boatmen, who had evidently seen some-

thing abnormal. I replied that it was altogether impossible. I then asked, 'Will you now relate to me carefully the whole story of your adventure with this big fish, as I want to form some definite opinion of the shape and appearance of the creature?'

Thus bidden, the old boatman cheerfully assented; but before I give his story I think it is necessary to give some short description of Lake Faemund, or Faemund Sjöen, as it is called in Norsk, to explain where I was, and how I came to be in the company of these two believers in the existence of a somewhat mythical monster inhabiting this lake.

It happened in this wise: about the middle of the seventies I determined to explore the wild and almost unknown regions (to Englishmen at least) round the lake in question, which is the second largest in Norway. It is about forty miles in length, from three to four miles in average width, and 2,200 feet above sea level. In its broadest part it is some seven miles in width, and just near there is situated an uninhabited island, six or seven English miles in circumference, covered with Scotch and spruce firs, with an unoccupied log hut, on the western shore. I believe I was at the time the first Englishman for many years to visit this district—at any rate this is what the two elderly men who lived at the south end of the lake assured me. I had come up to these high regions with my tents and baggage (using packhorses of course), travelling on foot from Stor Sjöen in Nord Osterdalen, and taking some three days on the actual journey. I had fished in Sölen Sjöen, Ister Sjöen, and the various lakes, streams, and rivers in the district, enjoying excellent sport both with trout and grayling, but having heard reports of gigantic pike and trout in Faemund, I pushed on from a village called Galten, after staying three weeks or so there and at the above-named places.

Late one afternoon I got to the house where these two people lived and stayed there one day to fish the river, and on the next hired the men with their boat to transport me with my tents, baggage, Norwegian servant, and my two bear hounds to the north end of the lake. I intended spending a week or so on the trip up, camping on each side, for the purpose of exploring its capabilities in the way of fishing, and also for elk and bear hunting. I was obliged to go up the east side at starting, as it began to blow hard from about NN.E., and we were forced to hug the shore quite close. By-and-bye a heavy gale got up, and as it was quite impossible to row against it we went ashore and pitched tents near a place called Sorken. We left again next day, and got to a sheltered bay, where we had to stop, as the wind had increased

to the force of a small hurricane, and a very heavy sea was raging no the lake. It was here we were camped at the opening of my story.

I had just finished supper, and we were all sitting round the camp fire listening to the discussion about the lake monster, as before mentioned; but now let the old boatman tell the tale in his own way.

DISCUSSING THE LAKE MONSTER

'Yes,' said he, 'we saw it plain enough, and it wasn't possible we could make any mistake. It was about a week after "St. Han's dag" (Midsummer day), I and my comrade here had been fishing round Soller Öen, the big island you see away there to the north-west. We were proceeding slowly over towards the east side of the lake, as we were in no hurry whatever; it was a real fine summer evening, and there wasn't a breath of wind on the surface of the lake. My comrade was rowing, whilst I was sitting with my back to the stern shoving gently with my oars. Suddenly he ceased rowing, and in a startled voice said, "Whatever kind of beast is that which is following us astern?"

'I looked over my shoulder and saw a queer-looking creature approaching us; it was almost on the surface of the water, and appeared to us to be making straight for the stern of the boat. It swam up to within ten or twelve feet, and then sheered off to the right side and passed slowly on ahead of us. How far was it? Certainly not more than sixteen feet at the farthest when it swam past us.'

'But what was it like?' I asked.

'Well, it had a broad, hideous, flat-looking head, and we both noticed long bits of flesh sticking out of the side of its mouth; its skin was quite smooth.'

'Like a lake's,' I suggested once more.

'No,' said he, 'not like a lake's. It was of a greenish tinge; and swam with a wavy motion, and, as I told you before, it was quite as long as our longest oar.'

'Why on earth did you not row at it, and bang on to it with your oars?' I asked.

'Oh, that is a very easy thing to say now,' remarked the old boatman, 'but we were so taken by surprise at the size of the beast, that we never thought of doing anything, and I really believe we were both a bit frightened.'

The other man assented to this, and remarked that *he* certainly was, and thought it wisest to let the 'Sjö-orm,' or lake serpent, go on his way unmolested.

I asked if the creature saw them. They both replied that he must have seen them, as he fixed his cold, evil-looking eye on the boat, and kept steadily on his course from them without going under water, and disappeared in the distance.

I asked how long ago it was since this took place, and if anyone else had seen such a fish.

They both agreed it was about four or five years ago, that no one else had ever seen it, and that they had never seen anything like it again. They also said there had always been a tradition of something of the kind having been seen in this lake, but as there were so very few inhabitants in the district no wonder the creature was seldom seen. This was all the information I was able to procure on the subject; but I made a note of the circumstance, and marked the place the men pointed out, as we passed up the lake; I determined to have a try after that monster fish some day, and wondered what it could have been that the two men saw, but no satisfactory solution of the mystery presented itself.

I gave up the idea that year of trying specially for him as I had intended, for I had no tackle fit to hold such a beast should I be so fortunate as to hook him; so I remained at the north end of the lake, and fished from there all the tarns, rivers, and tributaries accessible from the peasant's house in which I was living.

The following year I arrived at the lake on July 4, which is quite soon enough for those high regions. I had some very large

artificial baits made for me, brought some extra strong salmon lines, and had strong trolling tops made for my rods, &c. I tried in various parts of the lake for that monster fish, and had some tolerable sport with pike and lake trout, but I could not raise the Sjö-orm, as we used to call him. I lost lots of tackle and bait with big pike, as some of them pulled the wire gimp traces all to pieces, and one day I caught a 28-pounder which mauled a brand-new solid gutta-percha roach bait, seven inches long (used for the first time), out of all recognition; the pike had got the whole bait in his mouth and crushed it with his teeth; however it is not necessary to enumerate all my casualties. I had some tolerable sport notwithstanding, and killed 623 lbs. weight of all kinds, pike, trout, perch and grayling, but never hooked the big fish nor any very big lake fish at all, the largest lake trout I killed not being more than 14 lbs., the biggest pike 28 lbs. I also managed to catch an abominably stiff neck through sitting so long in a boat in the cold wind, it being an atrociously cold summer and the wind principally in the North, which spoilt my sport considerably. I did not get rid of it until a fortnight afterwards, when the elk season had begun.

The two following years I fished in and around Faemund, both times with a companion, but we had indifferent sport, and by this time I had begun to look on the monster fish as a mythical beast—a creature probably evolved out of the inner consciousness of the two boatmen, by the medium of a bottle or two of aquavit.

Early in July 1881 I was again in those regions, and found fairly comfortable quarters on the western side not far from the lake, and near the widest part, where the wooded island, called Soller Öen, was situated. I had not been long at my new abode before I determined to camp on the island and fish round it, as I heard there were big trout and pike to be found near the shore. I took tents therefore, and camped near the log hut on the west side of the island. I must mention here that I had bought an enormous electro-plated bait for pike at Gothenburg in Sweden, at which place I stopped *en route* to Christiania. I bought also an extra-strong English-made salmon line. They use these strong lines and big baits for fishing in Lake Wenern, where the trout and pike are of a gigantic size Previous to leaving England, I had a large gruesome-looking fish bait made by an enterprising blacksmith who was quite a genius in his way. This was constructed of two thin pieces of sheet iron, painted and varnished so as to resemble a 1-lb. roach; there were fifteen hooks, in

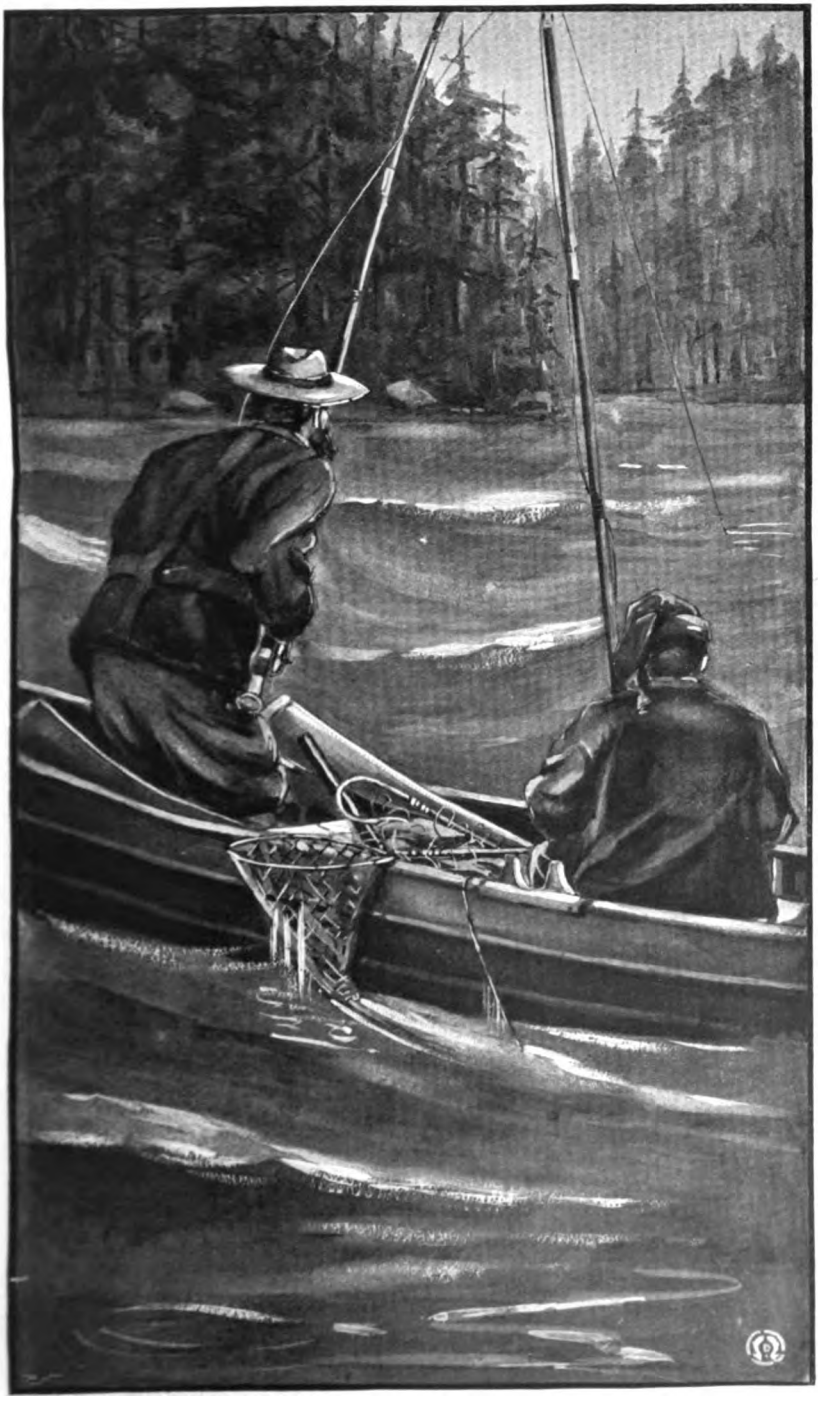
threes, scattered about the body of this phantom, and I had thick brass swivels and twisted brass wire fixed on for a trace.

I used both these large baits several times, sometimes sunk at a depth of from forty to fifty feet, but I never caught anything on the sheet-iron roach, though on the electro-plated bait I got a large pike, which was the largest I ever caught in this lake, weighing close on 37 lbs., and he gave me some trouble before I hauled him into the boat, though he was well gaffed. He seized hold of my leg in the bottom of the boat as I was clubbing him on the head, and nearly got his teeth through my leather gaiters.

This year I also killed a lake trout of over 16 lbs., using a perch of over 1 lb. weight for bait; I was trying for the 'lake serpent' at the time, or for any large pike that might happen to be around, but rose this fine trout instead, which I regretted didn't take a large salmon fly I had on the other line, in which case he would have given better sport. For some days I had indifferent luck and rose no fish of any size worth mentioning. I had only recently been considering the advisability of changing my quarters and trying some other part of the lake; as it was now late in August, however, I delayed moving, and still kept to my island camp. I congratulated myself eventually that I had decided to remain, as the following strange adventure happened to me in the evening of the very next day.

I had been out fishing from early morning, spinning round the island at short and long distances from the shore; it was the second time I had been round that day, and I was now about 400 yards from the shore on the N.E. side. I had the sheet-iron roach bait on my thickest line and strongest rod, which was on the right side facing the stern. On the other side I was spinning a gutta-percha phantom, and had also a couple of large trout flies on an ordinary salmon line.

My Norwegian servant was rowing, and we were proceeding serenely along before a fresh S.E. breeze, when suddenly there came a tremendous tug at the right-hand line, on which was the sheet-iron bait aforesaid. I immediately seized the rod on the other side and gave it to the man to reel up—whiz-z-z, and whir-r-r-r went the reel of the first rod, which was pulled violently out of its place, and my gaff, landing-net, and gun (which I always carried in the boat) became generally and indiscriminately mixed up with the line and reel; the whole outfit, in fact, was nearly overboard before I could get hold of the butt-end of the rod. When I had at last grasped it in my hands, cleared away the other things, and begun to reel up, I found I had hooked



I HOOKED SOMETHING WHICH SEEMED LIKE A DEAD WEIGHT

something which seemed like a dead weight, and I at once concluded I had got hold of a sunken rock or a sodden trunk of a tree, which one occasionally meets with some yards under water. When my man had rapidly reeled up the line, and placed the rod in the boat, he took the oars and proceeded to back water with all his might and main, as I had by this time over 100 yards of line run out; meantime I reeled up slowly, keeping a firm hold of whatever was at the other end. It seemed to be very low down at first, but at length appeared to be gradually rising towards the surface. I had recovered some 90 yards of line, and was slowly, but surely, approaching what I feared was only a tree trunk. I was standing on the stern seat, keenly searching the depths, when I plainly caught sight of a great length of something not very far below the surface of the water. It lay perfectly motionless at the time, and I saw that it was of a dark, greenish colour, on the only part visible to me, and at the moment I concluded it must be a sodden log floating under water, with possibly some dark green moss on the bark. That is what passed through my mind at the time. I was bearing as much as I dared on the rod, which had a most unusual strain on it, all the time as the line was reeled up short and quite taut. I had just given another pull at it, when suddenly the 'log' was galvanised into life and action, and with a powerful and unmistakably fish-like motion, the creature dived slowly, but determinedly down towards the depths of the lake, keeping, however, at about thirty or forty yards under water. He took out, I should say, 120 yards of line at that run; then stopped and sulked. I could not get him to move a single inch for quite five minutes, and again it seemed as if I was pulling on a mere dead weight.

I shouted to my man to back water again hard, as the wind was blowing us on, the line was perilously taut, and the rod bending nearly double; he did so with all his strength. Presently the line began to slacken, and I reeled up again as quickly as I possibly could, until I had wound up fifty yards or so, then it got taut once more, and I became aware that the beast was coming our way, though at a considerable depth under water. 'Whatever have I got hold of now?' said I, as, by this time, it was manifestly certain I had hooked a fish of an unusually gigantic size and weight. 'Perhaps we have got hold of the Sjö-orm at last!' replied my man with a laugh, but this soon changed into a look of intense astonishment as the powerful creature swam swiftly and silently past us in deep water, parallel with the boat's course (which we had just altered) and at about twenty-five to

thirty yards distance. 'A hundred-pound pike more likely!' I rejoined. Away went the fish, causing the line to hiss in the water as he sped on his mad career. He soon got ahead of us again, though my man backed water at a great rate, assisted by the wind, which was now at our backs, and he appeared to be heading for the north end of the lake, which was some twenty miles off. I may as well mention here that for several minutes at a time I let him tow us along, and told my man to cease backing water, and to rest on his oars, just to see what would happen; true, the wind was blowing fresh, in gusts, but there was not the slightest doubt in my mind at the time that the creature pulled us along with very little inconvenience to himself, but I was so fearful of my line or rod breaking under the strain that I did not allow this towing business to go on for long. By-and-bye he rose again, nearer the surface, yet still increasing his distance little by little, and taking with him more line, which I was forced to let out.

All this time I had been grasping the rod and line tightly with my left hand, only letting out as little as was absolutely necessary. At last, after several powerful tugs at the line, he appeared to be really approaching the surface, of which fact I informed my man, who was most eager to get a glimpse of the Sjö-orm, as he had now begun to call him.

He was standing up in the boat whilst backing water, and looking intently on ahead; I also was standing up, with one foot raised on the stern seat, and straining my eyes in the same direction, when, quickly and suddenly, the creature rose on the surface. We both saw him at the same instant, and quite distinctly, as he appeared on the top of the water and turned his whole broadside on to us. It is very difficult to give a detailed description of the monster—for monster he was without any reasonable doubt—as he did not remain for any length of time on the surface, but at that identical moment I reckoned he was certainly not more than seventy or eighty yards at the farthest, as he was within a fair shooting distance for a duck gun. Both of us noticed a vast wide bulk of something which we took to be his head, over which the swell of the waters seethed and foamed. We had ample time to calculate that there was a distance of several feet between the curve of his body near the tail fin, which we clearly saw, and the brass wire trace attached to the bait, which was obviously inside his monstrous mouth. One circumstance I particularly noticed at the time was that the bright glow of the setting sun sparkled merrily on the large brass

WE BOTH SAW HIM AT THE SAME INSTANT

swivels of the trace, close to his mouth. These double swivels certainly were not more than five or six inches from the bait, therefore were very near the mouth of the brute. This fixed my attention at the time of his rising to the surface, and was the only fair chance I obtained of making any but a rough guess at his length; but, judging from what I saw, I should be inclined to estimate the distance between the swivel nearest his mouth and the tail at not less than seven or eight feet.

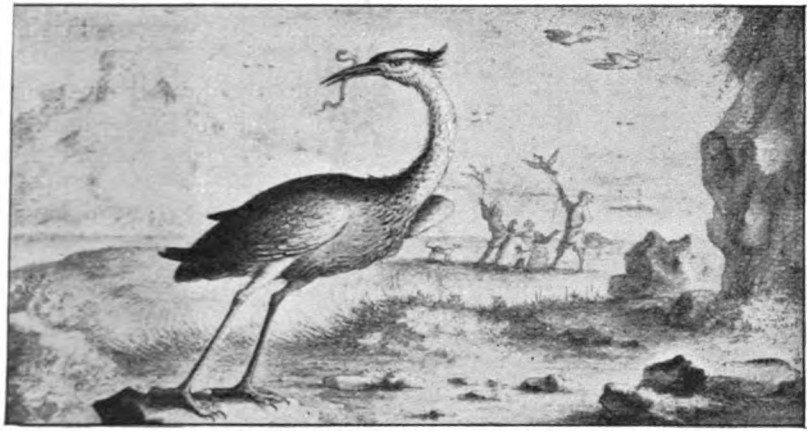
Neither of us could see the shape of his head, for he never once raised it, though, as I have remarked, I had seventy yards of line, trace and all, out of the water straight from his mouth, which kept a most unusually powerful and determined grip on my tackle. He was quite broadside on to us at one time, but remained only a brief period on the surface, as apparently he did not relish the waves breaking on his back and head. Suddenly, whilst we were observing his movements with eager eyes, he made a dash forward at right angles to the boat, then he gave a tremendous lash or two on the waves with his curved tail, quite three feet of which we both saw. This, in the gleam of the sunlight, appeared to be of a greenish hue, and the end of it seemed to us at the time to resemble a huge fan; it was certainly not the least like the tail of a pike or lake trout, neither did it bear any resemblance to the tail of a burbolt (lake in Norsk).

After a short but determined struggle, and a few preliminary tugs, he dived again straightway into the depths without even giving us a glance of farewell. I kept a taut hand on him, however, all this time, but it was all to no purpose; I could not check his headlong descent by any manner of means, fair or foul, and the speed at which the line ran out at times caused my left thumb to feel very unpleasantly hot. At last down he went, steadily and surely down, until he had exhausted all my line, which measured about 140 or 150 yards. The strain on the rod was so great that I feared it would break off at the second joint, so I let him pull on the line alone, which he did with a vengeance. My man hadn't ceased to back water all this time, as the fish was going on ahead as well as down, but it was of no earthly use, the fish was our master. At last, snap went the line and he was gone, taking with him my sheet-iron bait and about 150 yards of my strongest and best line. We were perfectly dumb-foundered at our bad luck, and could not imagine what kind of a fish it was.

We tried all we could to recover the line, rowing about for some time, as the wind began to drop not long after, and the

lake swell soon went down. We then went on shore, and I got another long thick line, I tied this and two or three other lines together, which we weighted, and then rowed to the spot where I had lost the fish. I sounded the place, and found a great depth of water, somewhere about 760 feet or more; we also tried with weighted lines and a small grapnel to hook some of that line up again; but we never got it, nor saw anything more of the monster fish, which had gone direct to the bottom, probably to gorge and digest my bait. What eventually happened to him I know not, as we never heard of any big dead fish being found. It is probable that he actually succeeded in digesting the bait, or possibly in disgorging it, hooks and all.

Shortly after this adventure I read in a French newspaper an account of a monster fish lately caught in Lake Constance. It was known there by the name of Wels—*Silurus glanis*. It was over seven feet in length, and of an enormous weight. No fish of that kind had been caught in the lake since 1498. It is common in the Danube, where it grows to an immense size, some 400 or 500 lbs. It has been caught in Lake Wenern, Sweden, and also in Norway. I have now no doubt in my own mind that the monster fish I struggled with in Lake Faemund was a sly Silurus—though up to the present I have not heard of one being caught there.



WALKS AND CLIMBS IN THE ZILLERTHAL

BY LIONEL W. CLARKE

THERE has been an enormous increase of late years in the popularity of mountaineering as a sport. The time is not yet long past when it was indulged in only by a few, and the man who had ascended the Matterhorn or Mont Blanc was regarded by his fellows much as an Arctic explorer is now, as a bold adventurer who had dared to face the forces of nature in her wildest fastnesses; while by some he was looked upon as a rash enthusiast, sadly wanting in regard for the safety of human life. Times have quickly changed; and now those who would attain distinction of this kind by mountaineering must seek more distant and less well-known groups than the Alps: they must climb to heights hitherto unattained, or explore, amid huge ranges like the Andes or the Himalayas, regions not yet trodden by the foot of man.

But though the Alps are now so universally known, and are the yearly summer resort of many hundreds of Englishmen, there still remain among them districts which our countrymen affect hardly at all; and one of the most beautiful of these is the Zillerthal group, in Tyrol. A short account of some walks and climbs made in this district during the summer of 1896 may perhaps be not uninteresting to English lovers of the mountains.

Our party, three in number, started from Kufstein, in the valley of the Inn, late in August, and in the course of a rambling walk

which ended in the Dolomites, spent a few weeks in the Zillerthal and the neighbouring district.

It is, as has already been said, a part of Tyrol which our countrymen visit but little. During the whole time we were wandering in the region we came across not one. German and Austrian tourists are numerous at Mayrhofen and the Berliner Hütte, for the Zillerthal is recognised as a 'resort' by the Teuton almost as the Engadin or Chamounix is by Englishmen, but of our mother tongue we heard not a word till we went on to the Dolomites, and arrived one day at Cortina. And then what a change! It was like stepping on to the English boat at Flushing or Rotterdam after a month in some out-of-the-way Dutch village. Spats everywhere, and starched collars, and wide-checked knickerbockers: so that we felt half ashamed of our large nailed boots and old and rather ragged garments.

It is strange that Englishmen thus love to congregate together even in their holidays; but so it is. Chamounix, the Engadin, Interlaken, Zermatt, Cortina: these are the places to which they throng in the Alps. And no doubt there are plenty of good reasons for their doing so. It saves trouble in the planning of a holiday, as in everything else, to follow the conventional course of action—one does not have the bother of inventing new routes, or the risk of finding bad accommodation. Everybody knows that there are clean hotels at Montreux and Zermatt, and that plenty of good food can be got at Pontresina. But there is much to be said in favour of less well-known regions, and with the Zillerthal, at least, little fault is to be found on the score of accommodation.

There are several characteristics which broadly distinguish, from the point of view of the mountaineer, this part of Tyrol from many other Alpine districts. Climbing here is a far less arduous undertaking than in Dauphiné, for instance, or the Bernese Oberland. In the Zillerthal group there are no fewer than twenty of the so-called huts—hotels is in many cases a more appropriate word—of the German and Austrian Alpine Clubs. These are all situated high up, and nearly all are inhabited throughout the summer, so that the amount of provisions, sleeping kit, &c.,.which the climber has to carry is reduced to a minimum. Day after day you may wander across peaks or passes from one of these huts to another, encumbered with nothing but a spare shirt to sleep in and such provisions as you require for the midday meal, and come down in the evening to comfortable quarters at a height of perhaps 7,000 feet above the sea. Here you make an excellent supper off a joint preserved in a glacier, you sleep in a comfortable bed

instead of on a straw-covered plank, and you start at eight o'clock in the morning instead of an hour after midnight; for most of the peaks are easily ascended from these 'huts' in four hours or less.

No doubt the scenery among these mountains, few of which exceed 12,000 feet in height, is in some degree less grand than that of the Mont Blanc chain, or the Monte Rosa group, but there is no lack of fine views even here; and comforts such as these, in the minds of all but the very enthusiastic lover of hard work, must always weigh heavily in the scale.

Not that we were, during the whole of our walk, equipped merely with a shirt and a packet of sandwiches. As a matter of fact, whenever we changed headquarters, and were unable to avail ourselves of the services of certain friends in the valley, who followed more or less our route, but chiefly by rail and road, we each carried about twelve pounds of luggage. One of the party bore with him all the paraphernalia of photography, thereby increasing his own share of weight with benefit to all alike; and to him we owe numerous vivid reminiscences, scattered about our walls, of that delightful time.

The first stage of our walk was from Kufstein to Mayrhofen, which may be called the capital of the Zillerthal. There are no high mountains here: only the precipitous and imposing Kaisergebirge rise in Dolomite-like pinnacles to a height of some nine thousand feet. On our first day, starting from Kufstein, we ascended the Elmauer Haltspitze, the highest of the chain. It was no easy task after a three-days' railway journey and ten months' life in plains, and we did not reach the top till late in the afternoon.

There is a deep satisfaction, if the weather be favourable, in this first attaining of a mountain peak. We lay, after a good meal, smoking and infinitely contented on the summit, gazing towards our destination, the snow-clad range of the Zillerthal, and looking down on all the country round. To the north there was one great ridge of rock, and then the plain stretched away, broken only by a few pine-clad undulations, till the eye lost itself in mist and sunlight; to the south the nearer hills were higher, but far below us: only the Hohe Salve, with the tiny inn looking like a square rock on its summit, broke the line of distant snow.

We went down on the Elmau side, cutting our first steps in a little ice-filled gully, and then, after the ever-fresh delight of a flying descent on screes, walked down a grass slope that was red with the glow of sunset. The whole changing scene of that day had for us a unique and extraordinary beauty, fresh as we were

from indoor life and the smoke of towns, and full of the enthusiasm of the first sight of the mountains.

It took us four days to walk from Elmau to Mayrhofen. Elmau itself, though a delightful spot, is one of the most primitive that I have seen in the Alps. Many of the women here wore trousers like the men—a peculiarity which we found almost universal in the higher villages and *sennhütte* of this district, but which is rarely seen in the valley. The place can be but seldom visited by tourists. The hostess at the little inn was at first a good deal exercised in mind as to which of us was the guide. It evidently seemed to her quite unlikely that three *herrschaften* should have come across the Kaisergebirge without one; and she put leading questions to us all in turn, in the hope of solving the problem as delicately as possible. Our pipes and tobacco-pouches, too, created a good deal of surprise among our companions in the *gaststube*, and when we told them that we had come from England, and had crossed the sea and travelled three days by railway, we assumed, for the moment, almost heroic importance.

We were quite sorry to leave the kind and simple folk at Elmau, but there was no time to lose while the weather was fine. So we made an early start next day, and, after crossing the shoulder of the Hohe Salve, walked down to Hopfgarten.

In the neighbourhood of that town great havoc had been caused by the extraordinary floods of the spring. Bridges had been carried away, boundaries destroyed, and trees swept down by the torrents. As we walked up the Kurzergrund on our way to the Salzachscharte manifold signs of destruction were borne in upon us. The river had evidently occupied half the valley during the flood, and its course was now entirely changed. At many a point an owner of fields bordered by the stream must have lost a wide strip of land, while his neighbour on the other side had gained as much; but the land gained was now of little worth, covered as it was with huge rocks and débris. In several spots the road was altogether washed away, and at one of these places we had to climb horizontally for about twenty yards across a steep face of bare rock, the river foaming just beneath us. Two women with whom we came up a little further on, both carrying heavy loads on their backs, had been obliged to climb some three hundred feet up the hillside to avoid the place.

The country between Hopfgarten and Krimml is wild and uncivilised enough. We slept that night in a little hut kept for the purpose of distilling spirit from the roots of the gentian. There was little to eat: only hard bread and the rich *kaiser-*

schmarn which forms one of the chief articles of food among Tyrolese peasants. It contains a large proportion of butter, and is excellent in small quantities; but, as a *pièce de résistance*—well, one requires to be accustomed to it. The next day we all felt rather disinclined for exertion, and, as we still had no food but black bread and milk, it took us a long time to cross the Salzachscharte and walk down the interminable valley to Krimml. We passed several *sennhütte*, at all of which an unlimited supply of milk was to be obtained. We ate as much bread as we could, but the milk gave less trouble in the swallowing, and I fear it predominated unduly: at all events, when at last we reached

ABOVE THE HÜTTE GREIZER

Krimml we were tired out and not in the best of humours. But a good supper and a smoke in the comfortable inn soon restored us, and it was with a deep satisfaction that we got into real beds that night, with the prospect of a long rest and an easy walk to Mayrhofen on the morrow.

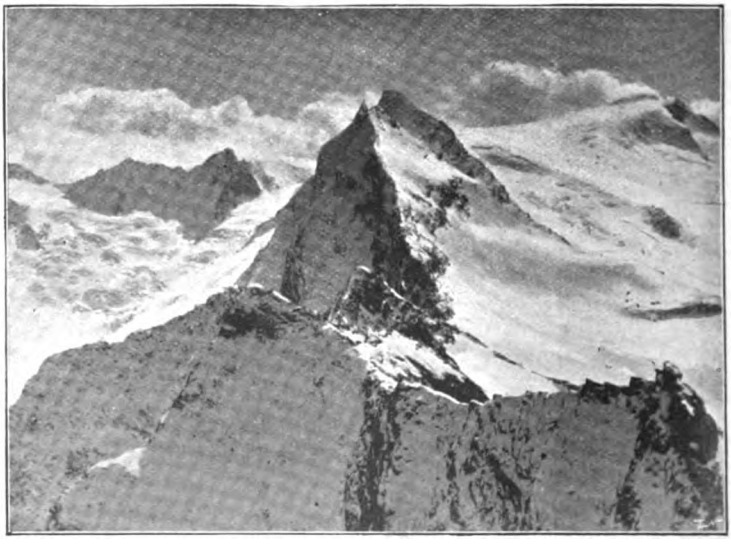
At Mayrhofen the rain came down steadily for three days, and we were forced to pass the time as best we might indoors. On the fourth morning, though September had but just begun, the mountain-slopes were covered with snow almost to the valley, which is here only six hundred feet above the sea. But after that day the snow receded rapidly, and about a week from the time of our arrival we left the village, and walked up, through Ginzling,

to the Greizer Hütte, which lies at the head of the Floitenthal, one of the side valleys which run down from the group of mountains culminating in the Hochfeiler to the main valley of the district.

We reached the Greizer Hütte about three o'clock, and, after a rest, walked on up the Floiten glacier to inspect its condition. The snow here was still lying deep, and at this time of the day walking was exceedingly hard work, for at every step one plunged in almost to the knee.

Some way above the hut we obtained a fine view down the valley. It was a cloudy evening, and most of the summits were obscured in mist; but here and there rays of sunlight broke through, lighting up the patches of new snow that lay scattered on the upper slopes, and making them glitter in splendid contrast to the blue shadows around.

Our plan for the next day was to cross the Schwarzenstein and descend to the Berliner Hütte. But it was plain enough that in the present state of the snow it would be a most laborious undertaking. We returned to the hut tired even with our short



THE GROSS MÖRCHNER

walk, and devoutly hoping for a frost during the night. An early start was resolved on, for it was important to get as far as possible before the sun melted the snow again.

As a matter of fact, it was six o'clock before we turned out, but

the going was vastly better than on the preceding day, and after about three hours' wandering among crevasses we arrived at the great plain of *névé* which stretches from the Gross Mörchner to the Schwarzenstein. Here we made a second breakfast, which

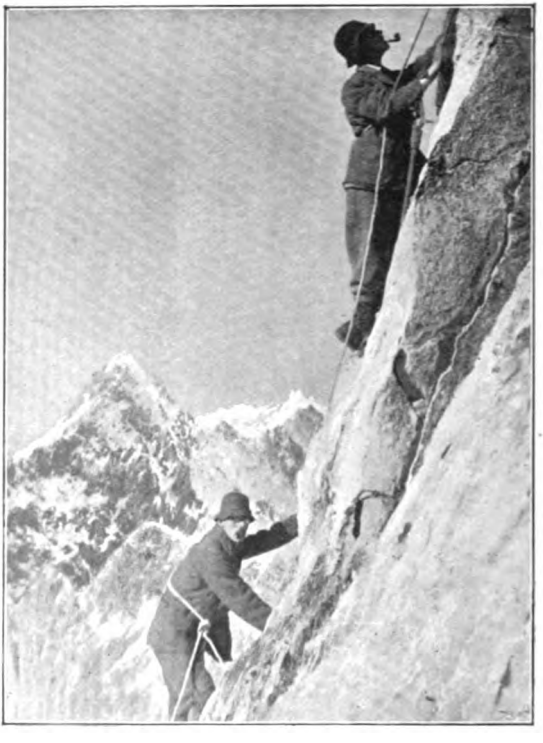
GUIDES AT THE BERLINER HÜTTE

renewed our energy and filled us with the desire of climbing. The Schwarzenstein rose gradually from us in the form of a broad hump, and did not look particularly interesting, so we made our way across the *névé* to the steeper Mörchner. We were soon on the top, in spite of the very soft state of the snow (which here lay on a slope facing directly to the south), and looking down over the steep northern face, which had as yet never been climbed. It certainly did not seem to offer an attractive route to the summit, and at that time, owing to the new snow which had fallen lately, it must have been far more difficult than usual.

Only a few days afterwards, while we were staying at the Berliner Hütte, the unfortunate Dr. Drasch, a well-known Austrian climber, was killed in attempting to ascend, with his friend Herr Sirk, the Mörchner by this precipitous face. He was climbing up some steep rocks in advance of his companion, when he suddenly slipped and fell. Herr Sirk had already passed the rope round a projecting piece of rock, but this precaution, though it was the means of arresting Dr. Drasch's fall, did not avail to save his life. The jerk was so great that one of his ribs was

smashed in. The broken bone entered some vital part; and when Herr Sirk, whose hand had also been injured by being dashed against the rock, succeeded in getting to where he hung suspended, life was already extinct.

The photograph of the Mörchner, which was taken some days later from the Zsigmondyspitze, shows the face of the mountain on which Dr. Drasch was killed. To the right, in the distance, is the Schwarzenstein.



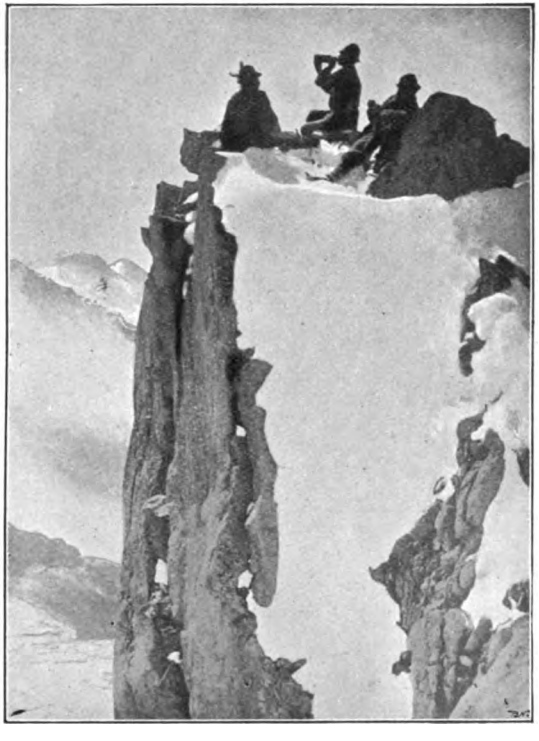
ON THE ZSIGMONDYSPITZE

We descended from the Mörchner by the same slope which we had come up, floundering in the soft snow, and at five o'clock arrived at the Berliner Hütte, certainly the most luxurious 'hut' that I have seen anywhere in the Alps. It lies at a height of 6,500 feet, at the top of the Zemmgrund, and is surrounded on all sides but one by mountains and glaciers. There is accommodation for eighty persons. We stayed here about a week, in varying weather, and though often kept indoors by rain and snow (an experience which is less disagreeable than usual here, for

there is a good stock of literature and, as a rule, plenty of pleasant society), we managed to accomplish some very enjoyable climbs.

The first peak we ascended was the Zsigmondyspitze, a jagged tooth of rock not unlike the Matterhorn in shape, though of course much smaller. It stands between the Floitenthal, into which a stone might be dropped from its summit, and the Zemmgrund, and thus is on the same ridge as the Gross Mörchner.

It was first climbed by the brothers Zsigmondy—by the north



THE TOP OF THE ZSIGMONDYSPITZE

arête. Owing to the state of the rocks, which were glazed with ice on this side, we were unable to follow their route, but both ascended and descended by the south side.

In about two hours from the hut, which we had left at seven o'clock, we reached the ridge, and were able to look down, from our position at the base of our peak, into the Floitenthal. An almost vertical wall descended from our feet to the valley, the steepness of this side of the ridge contrasting strangely with the gradual slope by which we had ascended from the Berliner Hütte.

Far below us, on the other side of the Floitenthal, lay the Greizer Hütte, where we had slept a few nights before. We jodelled loudly, in the hope of attracting the attention of its inmates; but the distance was probably too great—at all events, we failed to elicit any response.

The climb begins with a pitch of rock that looks decidedly steep from below, but is in fact, owing to the excellent hold, quite easy work. You then move upwards over some rough and rather loose rocks, and afterwards traverse on to the west face of the mountain. At this point there is a rather awkward passage of about three yards: one has to worm one's way across a smooth slab of rock which offers but little hold; it is, I think, the most difficult bit of the climb. We got past it, however, without mishap, and returned again to the *arête*.

About fifty feet from the top it is usual to again leave the ridge, and climb by a gully on the east face. We did not, however, do so, but kept to the *arête* right up to the summit. This is, I think, a more interesting route; and it is not difficult, as, though the rocks are steep, the hold is everywhere good.

We had an exceedingly enjoyable half-hour on the top, which was duly commemorated by a photograph. The descent took but an hour and a half, so we were back at the hut by one o'clock. The Zsigmondyspitze is certainly to be recommended as affording a very interesting scramble considering the time it occupies.

Of our other climbs from the Berliner Hütte, the one most worth describing was a combined ascent of the Turnerkamm and the Grosse Mösele, the two highest of the peaks which can be climbed from this starting-point. Our plan was to descend to the Furtschagel Haus, in the Schlegeisthal, which lay almost directly behind the Mösele, and on the following day to climb the Hochfeiler, the highest of the Zillerthal group. We took with us as guide Franz Huber, of Ginzling, and started with a lantern about four o'clock on a fine starlight night. The first symptoms of dawn soon appeared, our lantern was extinguished, and as we slowly walked up the glacier called the Hornkees the light rapidly grew stronger. At last the sun appeared in a gap in the ridge to our left, and the glacier was bathed in a flood of brilliant light. The effect was remarkable, for the slope of the glacier was such as to make its surface almost parallel to the sun's rays, and while one side of every little ridge and knob of snow was yellow with the sunlight, the other still reflected the blue of the western sky.

We were soon on the little *col* known as the Rossrücksharte, and hence proceeded to traverse round on to the south side of the

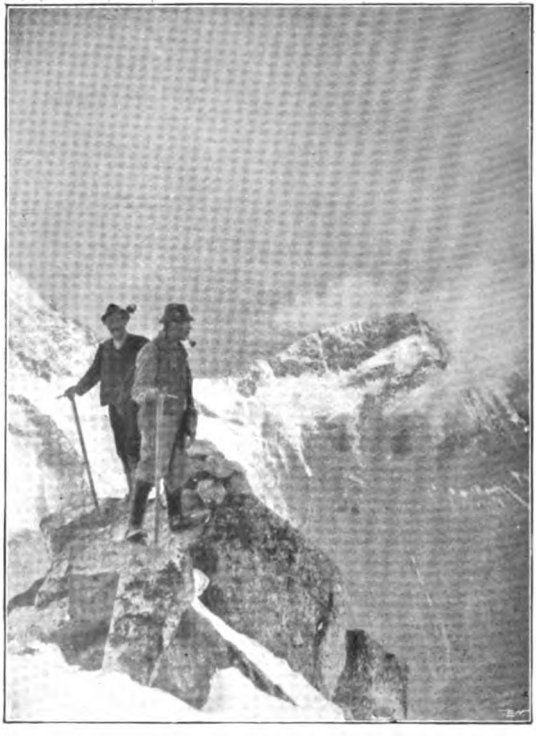
Turnerkamm. Hitherto the surface of the snow had been crisp and hard, but now the sun was beginning to tell on it, and our feet sank in in a manner by no means conducive to rapid progress. There was one member of the party, however, who, owing to the prodigiously large boots he wore, did not suffer from this inconvenience. We had often twitted him before with the remarkable size which his feet seemed always to assume on a climbing expedition, but it was his turn now. While we plunged in up to the ankles at every step, he was still supported by the thin frozen surface, and walked gaily on before us, jeering pitilessly at our discomfiture.

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE TURNERKAMM

We struck the ridge only a few yards from the top of the mountain, and were soon sitting on outspread *rücksacks* and enjoying the splendid view. Above, the sky was perfectly clear, but beneath us rolled a great sea of clouds which hid all the valleys and lower ridges. In the foreground lay the Schwarzenstein, with its long snow-slopes broken here and there by great projecting buttresses of rock, a far more imposing peak from this side than from the Mörchner; to the right of it the eye travelled over great billows of heaving cloud to where the Venediger and its neighbours towered out of the mass like huge islands from the sea.

We lay there long, entranced, watching the movement of the clouds, and when at last we started to retrace our steps to the

Rossrücksharte it was already nearly twelve o'clock. We had not got far when the clouds began to show ominous signs of rising, and soon after the *col* was passed on our way to the Grosse Mösele we were suddenly enveloped in mist. The rest of our walk was not interesting, and involved decidedly hard work. The snow was now thoroughly soft, and let us all through impartially. Our clothes, too, were wet, and our spirits proportionately damp. When at last we reached the top of the



THE TOP OF THE FURTSCHAGEL HORN

Mösele, there was nothing to be seen. We made a hurried meal, and started down for the Furtschagel Haus. But we were only at the beginning of our difficulties. Even our guide could not at first find a practicable route in the fog, and we wandered about, miserable enough, scarcely able to see three yards, and devoutly wishing we had gone back to the Berliner Hütte. At last, after slipping about for some time on unpleasantly steep rocks covered with a thin layer of snow, we discovered a practicable gully which led us down on to the glacier.

For half an hour longer we moved but slowly downwards, threading our way among numerous crevasses. But the hut was reached at last, and for the rest of that afternoon we sat in the little guest-room, enveloped in blankets, while our clothes were dried before the fire.

Our project of climbing the Hochfeiler was destined never to be carried out. Fresh snow fell that night, and when we looked out at four o'clock next morning the weather did not seem at all promising. We held a council of war, and decided to wait one more day before attempting the peak, which requires good conditions to be ascended from this side. That day we went up the Grosser Greiner, and came down again to the Furtschagel Haus. But the weather did not improve, and after spending one more night in the hut, we returned to the Berliner Hütte, traversing the Furtschagel Horn, which affords an interesting scramble, *en route*.

This was our last climb in the Zillerthal range. For the next three or four days it rained almost continuously, and when at last the sun appeared again, and we strolled once more up the glacier and across the great snow-plain of the Schwarzenstein, it was to descend to Taufers in the Ahrnthal, whence we went on to the Rieserferner group.

A BICYCLE GYMKHANA

BY SUSAN, COUNTESS OF MALMESBURY

In our part of the country a great many calls had recently been made on the public pocket, which was beginning to show signs of depletion, and to respond but feebly to the appeals of that optimistic section of the public which does good with its neighbours' money. I was at that time president of our local county bicycle club, the 'Atalanta,' and was beginning to feel rather careworn about its finances. A large sum of money was necessary to provide a proper place of meeting, with shelter in case of rain, and a good track. It was therefore decided to hold a gymkhana, and devote the proceeds to the above object.

I began by instructing the secretary to call a meeting and issue notices to the seven-and-twenty members of the committee of the 'Atalanta,' with the usual result—namely, that the president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary attended. The bugler, a newly appointed officer of the society, was indisposed, with influenza, as she alleged, but I believe her malady was owing to ill-directed efforts at performing on an instrument little suited to her frail figure and diminutive stature. The other two-and-twenty ladies wrote polite little notes, some scented and some not, but all to the same effect, though veiled in elegant language—viz. that they couldn't be bothered to come.

Now, I had been elected president of the 'Atalanta' for several reasons, none of which argued any special business capacity on my part. That faculty, I confess with humility, has always been supplied by the male portion of my surroundings, to whom I have ever gone for practical advice and assistance.

I owed my election, evidently, to my name, a certain facility

for using my pen, and a habit of seeing things from a common-sense point of view, so influencing backsliders and waverers in the good cause, while I never weakened my case by over-stating it.

I was described in cycling organs as 'leading' my club runs. This I did in the Irish fashion—from behind. Not being a good hill-climber, when I turned out, escorted by the ardent youth, both male and female, of the neighbourhood, I was apt to be like

OUR BUGLER

the picture which was after Raphael—a long way after. I was not, I believe, much missed by the vanguard, and the vice-president, who cycles for her figure, was glad of an excuse to slacken her pace and attend her dilatory chief.

After these confessions, you will guess that our club secretary was a man, and that he in reality managed the whole affair.

Our first secretary had been a charming girl—quite an advertisement, in point of face and figure, for the 'Atalanta;' but, although the attendance of the male sex at our meetings

rose fifty per cent., I found the whole work thrown on my incompetent shoulders. Therefore when Providence stepped in, and I, acting on information received, suggested, at a full meeting convened for the purpose, that the committee should offer our pretty and (at that moment) very rosy friend a wedding present on her 'unavoidable retirement from her arduous duties,' my motion was carried unanimously and with acclamation.

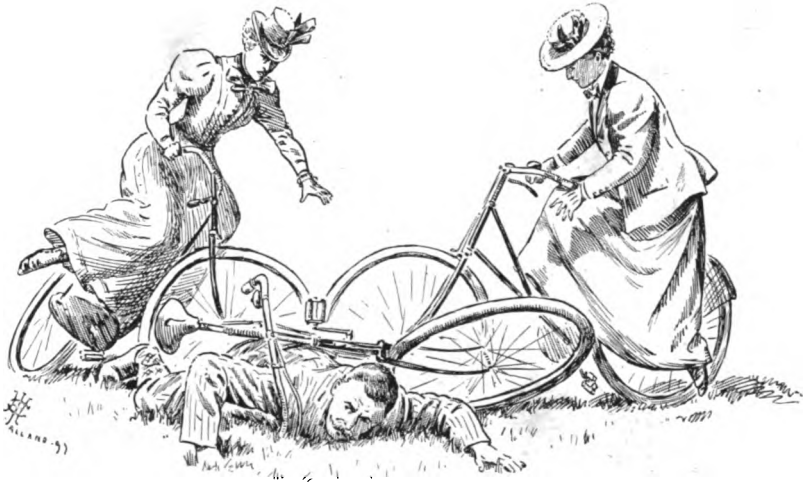
IN BEAUTIFUL BRAND-NEW 'RATIONALS'

So it came to pass that, when I was called upon to arrange a gymkhana, I had taken care to provide myself with the assistance of an expert in the shape of our new secretary. He had been the owner of a gymnasium in the neighbouring town of Valebourne, but, after some lucky speculations in cycling shares, had been deposited by the tide of the Great Boom at high-water mark, with a competency and a tiny cottage, not far from my abode at Avonsworth. As soon as my piteous case had been laid before his sympathetic eyes, he readily consented to be my adviser and right hand in all matters relating to the 'Atalanta,'

and was shortly the centre of an admiring and devoted circle of ladies, whom he led on adventurous rides and taught all the newest tricks of the trade.

The lady captains of the club soon found themselves completely deserted, and went for melancholy runs in beautiful brand-new 'rationals,' but in solitary grandeur, and without any fighting-tail at all.

Our meetings were held alternately at each other's houses, but only at mine could a gymkhana take place, as I had given up a large field and caused it to be specially prepared for the purpose. There were horrid little tufts of grass all over it, and no one can guess the trouble it was to get a perfectly level surface. Happily,



MAKING EACH OTHER'S ACQUAINTANCE

one of the men who worked in my garden had formerly been employed as a navvy on the railway, and was able to accomplish what was necessary. About this time I used frequently to meet my luggage-cart on its return from the town, bearing what looked like a large barrel of beer. On these occasions I had the tact to look another way, and not to recognise either my second coachman or the freight he bore. Levelling, I reflected, requires some nicety, and the weather was undoubtedly close.

A stout fence was soon erected round the scene of our future sports. It was a lovely spot, and well sheltered from our windy quarter by a belt of firs, with a thick undergrowth of rhododendrons, young birch and sycamore trees. Here lurked innumerable rabbits, who emerged from their strongholds to commit depreda-

tions on our newly rolled turf, at unearthly hours in the morning, while we were all sleeping snugly in our beds. This would never do; so, as the grounds were a sanctuary to all wild creatures, there was nothing for it but to invest in a large amount of wire netting. The track soon began to be pleasant to ride over, and in a few months the centre of the green expanse looked like a billiard-table.

Here we practised our figures for the coming Musical Ride, and the various tricks which were to astonish the public on the great day. Many fair or gallant riders made close acquaintance with Mother Earth—some, intent on intricate evolutions, cannoned against each other, and the ice among the lads and lasses seemed in a fair way to be extensively broken.

I began to fear that all my regiment of accomplished riders would follow the lead of Miss Vivian, our pretty secretary, and Mr. Grey, her *fiancé*! These latter it had been found impossible to separate, and therefore we included gentlemen among our performers for the great occasion.

But oh! why is a lady's complexion to overshadow all other considerations? What trouble I had with my team of first-rate riders, when the important detail of costume came before the committee! Our secretary, hot, distracted, his hair rumpled up with emotion, turned them all over to the authority of their president, and went home to his tea in a pet. There was only one thing to be done, and I did it. I put my foot down, gently but firmly, sparing neither age nor sex, and ordered all alike to be dressed in white, distinguishing sides only by coloured sashes for the men, and bouquets of flowers on the handle-bars of their machines for the ladies. At one fell swoop I laid a ruthless hand on eccentric headgear, startling boots and stockings, and coloured gloves. Balloon sleeves were rigidly tabooed. It needed all their loyalty to me—and their knowledge that, after all, I was right—to allay the agitation consequent on this high-handed proceeding.

Then I had to divide the ladies and gentlemen into teams, assorting them as well as I could according to size and colouring, proficiency, and—shall I add?—age. One of my best riders was a lady between fifty and sixty, with snow-white hair, a plump, trim little figure, and a beautiful colour in her cheeks. I once rashly went out with her; but, in spite of her years, she brought me home deflated both in mind and body, having scorched up and coasted down hill at about fourteen miles an hour during the best part of a summer's day. She was now the mainstay of the 'Atalanta,' and kept the weaker sisters well up to the mark by her scathing

criticism and splendid example. With this exception, my child performers were certainly the most satisfactory. No 'bicycle face' was visible here; fearless and utterly devoid of self-consciousness, after a few months' training they moved at the word of command like a crack regiment, held themselves beautifully, were of a cheerful countenance, and sublimely indifferent to the gallery. Saucy and smiling, our child-brigade 'faced the music' on the great occasion.

It will be obvious that neither I, as president, if I valued my influence, nor the secretary (torn, as if by wild omnibus-horses, in different directions by his many devotees) could possibly adjudge the prizes, which were many and valuable, and given by members of the club as well as outsiders interested in the proceedings. Therefore we applied to two well-known professional cyclists to assist us on the occasion with their advice, and also with a little instruction at the last, so as to put a final polish on our performances.

Being near a large watering-place, I thought it better to have an extra force of police to guard the entrance gates, and generally to perambulate Avonsworth, in case any roughs managed to get in. Our Tournament, as we decided eventually to call it, had been extensively advertised, and it was hoped to realise a considerable sum at this our first venture, after which we intended to devote our gains to charity. I was much besieged by representatives of the press during the week which preceded the great event. Among others, a lady presented herself and applied for a free ticket, stating that she was the cycling reporter of 'The Modern Miss.' 'Poor thing!' I thought, 'it must be a hard life; she is certainly very unattractive.' But, after some delay, I ended by giving her what she asked for.

The day at length arrived. All was ready, and, in spite of depressing forecasts by weather prophets, the sun shone, and the wind, that arch-enemy of the cycle, resting in some icy northern cavern far away, sent us but a light reviving breeze, to cool us now and then. It was settled that I was not to ride, having enough to do to receive my guests and provide for their material comfort. The performers arrived in good time, and retired into the tent specially prepared for them, to compose their minds and *toilettes*, and inspect their machines before going into action.

I noticed that Miss Vivian's eyes were very red, and that Mr. Grey seemed agitated; but the others, though a little nervous, were in their normal condition of harum-scarum frivolity. By-and-bye, however, a whisper reached me: 'Lady Avonsworth,

Miss Vivian declares she will not ride to-day. What *are* we to do? She has had a dreadful quarrel with Mr. Grey.'

I left a deputy in my place to receive the guests, and proceeded to the tent, outwardly calm. Inwardly I raged at the whole race of lovers. I appealed to Miss Vivian's pride, to the pleasure which her conduct would give a hated rival—cause, we knew, of all the mischief. Enough! I conquered. She would ride, but she would never speak to Frank again or to that Minx! A few sobs, a little sal-volatile, and the danger was past.

'Well,' said our harassed secretary, to whom I announced the success of my diplomatic mission, 'even as it is, she will probably club the whole Maze. We ought not to have let them lead. They do nothing now, either of them, but dream and moon about. This is the third time she has threatened to give up. I am sick of it. I shall retire; these ladies are too much for me.'

Our prizes were set out on a table. Some of them were lovely, and all of them valuable. They included every sort of glorified bicycle accessory, watch-bracelets, watch-brooches, a purse of money to be publicly presented to the secretary, a charming Queen Anne tea-caddy in silver, inscribed 'To the Countess of Avonsworth, from the committee and members of the Atalanta Club.' There were also two bicycles of the last new fashionable pattern. The tea-caddy was to be a surprise, so I did not like to approach the table, for fear of being caught looking at it.

Vaguely I saw, in the distance, mixing with the crowd round the prize-table, the odd figure and disagreeable countenance of the lady reporter of 'The Modern Miss.'

The sports began, and we were well into the first part of the programme, when we came to the item called 'The Maze.' Our professional instructor kept his eye on Miss Vivian, who was swallowing her tears, and was quite disfigured with crying, while the wicked little face of her rival followed just behind, demure and mischievous, the naughty puss! Once or twice the former nearly broke down, but, with timely prompting and encouragement, retrieved herself, and all went well.

We then adjourned to the house for tea, and I was afterwards told that a detective in plain clothes guarded the prizes while we were away. How, then, could subsequent events have taken place? We never knew.

We began Part II. with 'Heads and Posts,' 'Tilting at the Ring,' and a 'Military Ride.' Then we came to 'Plaiting the Maypole,' a

novelty, and one of the great attractions of our programme. Here our *fiancés*, who were wanted to ride, were nowhere to be found. I went in search, and came upon them rather suddenly behind a rhododendron clump at the other end of the enclosure, 'practising,' so they said, 'a new trick.' Whatever this may

PRACTISING A NEW TRICK

have been, they had some difficulty in disentangling their bicycles, which had got rather mixed during the proceeding. At last, with radiant faces and restored cheerfulness, they took up their posts beneath the maypole. I was really proud of my club, for anything prettier I have never beheld. It was like a fairy scene, and the

applause was terrific. After that we had more figures, and various tricks, easy and difficult, closed our programme, which had lasted nearly three hours. Then came the judging, left in the competent hands of our professional friends.

During this time all our attention had been given to the performers. The level lawn, with its background of dark firs and flowering rhododendrons; the light green of the birch, with its silver stems; the shadows as they began to grow longer on the grass; the white dresses, happy faces, and graceful, swaying movements of the cyclists as they threaded their way in and out

THE JUDGING

of the most complicated figures at the word of command—all this had kept our eyes riveted on the pretty scene spread out before us. Every one of us had forgotten the table with the prizes, except myself, and I had remembered only to avoid it. It was now brought forward and placed in a convenient position for me to present the awards.

One by one these were adjudged and handed to the lucky recipients. At last a child cyclist was called up, and the judge read out from his list: 'Enamelled watch, studded with diamonds; Miss Lily Hartford.' By my side a member of the committee

stood, handing me the prizes as they were called out. But, to our horror and confusion, this was nowhere to be seen. The poor child began to cry with disappointment. We hunted in all places, likely or unlikely. There were no signs of the missing jewel. The same thing happened with a pearl pin and bracelet which had been offered for competition. We got through the rest of the presentations as well as we could, assuring the defrauded winners that they should receive either the articles themselves, when found, or ample compensation.

The detective's face grew long. There could be little doubt the things were stolen, and we left the matter in his hands. Soon afterwards everyone left the place, delighted with the gay scene and beautiful day.

The local paper was most obliging in its remarks on our efforts, mentioning our silvery-haired rider by name, and saying that she rode with great *embonpoint.* I conclude this meant *entrain*; but as she was very proud of her figure, I was glad that she, not being a particularly good French scholar, was quite pleased with what had been said.

Months afterwards we were called upon to identify certain articles which had been discovered at the house of a well-known professional thief in London, with whom we were also confronted. The articles proved to be our missing prizes, and the thief the *soi-disant* lady reporter of 'The Modern Miss,' now in the costume of his own sex, and quite a boy.

It was a sad affair, and in the course of the case it transpired that there were many other victims beside ourselves.

We were obliged to appear as witnesses, and were presented, I cannot tell why, with seven-and-sixpence each. This noble sum we handed to the detective, who was radiant, his professional honour being now satisfied, while we were too happy to recover our property, and vowed in future to profit by the lesson administered through our light-fingered acquaintance.

A GOLFING MELODRAMA

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON

It is often interesting and even exciting—akin to the mild excitement of guessing acrostics—to trace the way in which a new word or phrase is sometimes added to the vocabulary of a nation. The phrase I refer to here is one which is familiar as yet only to a small section of the community—golfers in a certain suburban quarter of the metropolis, but there is no doubt that the word with which accident has, among them, enriched the language will gradually win its way to more popular usage.

The term in question is the verb to 'stove-pipe,' and I propose to explain very shortly how it won its way into use and recognition.

'Old Half-crowns,' as he was commonly called, was one of the most popular men in the Rusurban Golf Club. I can scarcely claim that he was a personal friend, for our acquaintance was only of the casual 'pass-the-time-of-day' kind that one has with so many men that one meets on the links. As a matter of fact it was not for a long while that I even knew his name. Once or twice, when I first began to meet him, I asked one or two—

'Who is that old fellow?'

And the answer always was:

'That! Oh, that's old Half-crowns, you know,' and I never troubled to inquire further.

But I had a kindly, friendly feeling towards him beyond what this casual acquaintanceship would seem to imply. I was not singular in this; everyone in the club held the same sentiments

in his regard; it was inevitable. The old fellow looked so cheery, so fat and so jolly; his eye was always so smiling and so kindly; he was always on such obviously good terms with himself and everyone else that it was impossible to feel otherwise than most benevolently disposed towards a man who was so evidently well disposed towards you and all mankind.

I have spoken of him as an old fellow. He was not really old at all, but just a middle-aged man—'the same age as everybody else,' as the phrase goes—just the age of every forty-nine men out of fifty that play golf. But everybody called him old—'Old Half-crowns' was his title with everybody, a kind of affectionate regard clinging about the venerable adjective, whether they knew him or not. But in point of fact everybody knew him; he was the sort of man whom you feel that you know intimately, whether you have been introduced to him or not.

And with regard to his sobriquet of 'Half-crowns,' which might seem to imply a hand rather too grasping for the acquisition of these coins, and a hardness in the matter of handicapping, nothing could really have been farther from his nature than any such quality. It is true that he did enjoy the winning of his half-crowns with a sort of simple, boyish enjoyment; but the pleasure was derived from the little triumph of winning them, and chaffing or being chaffed about them, rather than from the value of the financial gain. He would be immensely disappointed if his victim did not allow him to squander the stake subsequently in the assuagement of the thirst of both of them, and commonly he was to be seen, after a match brought to a successful issue, seated at a table surrounded by half a dozen fellows laughing at his simple enjoyment of his triumph and drinking at his expense.

It is very certain that he was successful in a great majority of his matches, though he was always careful to 'pooh, pooh!' any such allegation brought against him, and for his success there was a very intelligible reason. He never went in for a competition! Often and often as he was pressed to do so, certain, almost, as it had become that he would win if he were to enter, 'Old Half-crowns' remained obdurate; he would not enter for a prize, whether by tournament, by score, or against 'bogey.' His motive did not transpire till later, and is bound up with the *dénouement* of this story, but the consequence was, according to the general laws on which handicap committees proceed, that whereas on the first institution of 'Old Half-crowns'' handicap, the figure had been fair enough, that figure had remained unaltered ever since. Other members had won prizes or monthly medals,

and their handicap points had been reduced; Old Half-crowns alone remained immovable, at the points which had originally been given him, in spite of much subsequent improvement.

Consequently, when he met a stranger going down in the train —and 'Old Half-crowns' was the very type of man with whom a stranger would be sure to fall into conversation and propose a game —they would set to to arrange the terms of a match on this wise:

Half-crowns (*loquitur*): 'Well, of course, I don't know your game, sir. I suppose we cannot do better than play handicap points.'

On these terms the match would be arranged, and the staked half-crown became virtually an asset of our old friend before a shot was struck.

Amongst the caddies, however, 'Old Half-crowns' had another sobriquet. He was the type of man who was bound to have a nickname from everybody. The caddies called him 'Old Stove-pipe,' and here we arrive, at length, on the track of that philological problem which I proposed for solution at the first drive off.

This nickname of 'Old Stove-pipe' was a tribute to yet another of our old friend's amiable idiosyncrasies. He invariably came down to golf in a tall or 'stove-pipe' hat, a frock-coat, gloves, and irreproachable attire generally. Immediately on arrival he would rush into the dressing-room, tear off these ensigns of respectability, and in a few minutes emerge in knicker-bockers, flannel shirt, shooting coat, cap, and all the habiliments of comfort and untidiness. Thus suitably arrayed he would pursue his pleasure and his half-crowns until the evening, then reassume his faultless garments before taking the train for town. It was a transformation as complete and as significant as the metamorphosis of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. He came down from town as 'Old Stove-pipe,' proceeded to his day's golf as 'Half-crowns,' and again resumed the stove-pipe of respectability in the evening. It did not matter whether the day were fine or wet, 'Old Half-crowns' was invariably at the Club. He was comparatively a recent convert to the game, having played only for some eighteen months in all. But what he lacked in age as a golfer, he made up in zeal, pursuing the game with all the fervour of the convert, and having all its maxims at his fingers' ends. When the weather was too vile even for him to venture forth, he would sit in the Club-room all day conversing, in the absence of humanity, with the Club parrot, which he had taught in this way to repeat several new phrases.

'Slow back!' 'Keep your eye on the ball!' and 'Don't press!' had from time immemorial formed part of this confounded bird's vocabulary; and lately, under the instruction of 'Old Half-crowns,' it had learned to say 'Put back the turf,' with a malevolence of intention which made it seem like the incarnation of the golfing conscience.

One day last summer I was asked to dine at Frank Webster's, the County Court judge. I did not know either my host or hostess very well, and arriving rather late for dinner—having secured, as one always does in these circumstances, the slowest hansom horse in London—I found myself ushered into a drawing-room thronged with strange faces. After greeting my entertainers, and explaining, with appropriate lameness, all about the horse, I looked round upon the company, and hailed, as a rising sun of comfort and geniality, what I had not the smallest doubt to be the rubicund countenance of my friend 'Half-crowns' or 'Stove-pipe.' He was looking directly my way, but, much to my surprise, no reflection of my own welcoming smile repeated itself on the fine round visage on which I had directed it. He gazed at me with the blank inattention of a perfect stranger, and the smile with which I had allowed my features to be irradiated died away in horrible confusion. I was determined to have this matter out, however, and, approaching my friend of the face of the rising sun, said to him in my best manner:—

'Excuse me, but have I not met you golfing?'

'Golfing!' said he, in as shocked a voice as if I had suggested meeting him at the 'Empire;' 'I never played golf in my life.'

'Most extraordinary thing!' I stammered. 'A marvellous likeness! Please forgive my mistake. Have you a brother?'

'Yes, I have a brother.'

'With a wonderful likeness to yourself?'

'Some people see a family likeness,' he answered drily.

At that moment dinner was announced, and I went down thinking that, whatever the facial likeness between the brothers, there was not much resemblance between this fellow's stilted manner and the warm geniality of the other.

'Not a patch on his brother,' was my comment to myself as I gave my arm to my fate, a lady of severe eyebrows, a masterful expression of face, and iron-grey hair brushed high up off her forehead *à l'impératrice*. I had not caught her name perfectly when we were introduced, but I had an impression that it was Smith. The name, however, is a detail

I opened my dinner conversation in my invariable manner—it saves an infinity of trouble to have a set formula—by saying:

'I have been golfing all day to-day' (this was entirely untrue; I had been in the City, but it would not have led to the same developments had I told her that).

The proper answer to this opening is: 'Have you? Where have you been playing?' and then, according to the ordinary laws of the evolution of conversation, you would find that the lady had a cousin who played on the same green, and you told her what a good player he was, and became friends at once.

My *impératrice* lady, however, answered irregularly, throwing all the game out of gear, with:

'Golf! Do you mean to say you play that dreadful game?'

'Oh, forgive me,' I said, 'I think it is the finest game in the world.'

'I don't call it a game at all,' she said significantly.

'You are quite right,' I replied. 'It is a science.'

'I call it,' she said severely, 'a madness—a dangerous madness. Please give me some salt.'

I helped her to it. It was quite unnecessary to ask this lady whether she were superstitious. There was not a tinge of that amiable folly about her.

'Well, really,' I said, 'I might admit "madness," perhaps, in the intensity of the enthusiasm it excites. But how "dangerous"? Surely the golfer is the most harmless of poor lunatics.'

'Harmless!' the lady sniffed. 'If you had seen the terrible consequences that I have seen resulting from it, you would not call it harmless.' She finished her soup, and laid down her spoon in the plate with a warlike clatter, preparatory to giving her undivided attention to her denunciation. 'If you had seen cases, as I have seen, of men—men who previously had been good husbands, good fathers, good men of business—neglecting their family ties, neglecting their social duties, neglecting their business engagements, all because they had allowed themselves to become engrossed by this most miserable game, you would not call it harmless, I assure you. You would only agree with me in calling it a most dangerous madness.'

I was so much aghast, that I could only ejaculate feebly:

'By Jove!'

'What did you say?' the lady asked sharply.

'Oh, I said,' I answered, recovering myself, 'that what you say is of course very true—very true. Only it so happens that I never seem to have met these cases myself.'

'You never know,' she said gravely; 'you never know. Turbot, please' (this to the butler). 'Some of those you meet, and encourage, perhaps, by playing with them, may be at that very moment neglecting their most sacred duties—probably they are. If you had seen the misery that I have seen introduced into happy families by that wretched game of golf, I do believe that, if you are a man of heart and conscience' (looking at me, as she held a piece of turbot transfixed by her fork, as if she much doubted my possession of these qualities), 'you would never be able to bring yourself to touch a golf-club again.'

Evidently this lady did not belie the masterful aspect of her features and her hair brushed back *à l'impératrice*. But the champagne had begun to come round by this time, and I felt myself not quite so much afraid of her.

'Then I suppose you would not marry a golfer, no matter what the inducements might be, or how much you might be in love with him?'

'I am already married,' she said, in a tone that showed me the impropriety of my way of putting the question.

'And what would you do,' I asked again, 'if your husband were to be afflicted by this madness, and were to become a golfer? It is a malady that does attack adults.'

'It is a malady that should not attack *my* husband,' said the lady with emphasis; 'I should not let him play.'

Clearly this was a most admirable woman. After marriage with her, one's way in life would be strictly mapped out for one. One would have no more trouble about making up one's mind. I wondered which of the men sitting round the table was so largely blessed, and—though not quite in those terms—asked her.

She indicated to me the man with the rubicund face whom I had mistaken for 'Old Stove-pipe,' and I was just turning to the lady again to tell her of my curious error, when I found that she was already absorbed in urging on a politician on the other side of her the undoubted merits of woman suffrage.

The young lady on my left was disengaged, and looked as if she wanted talking to:

'I have been golfing all day to-day,' I said with a pleasant smile.

The young lady replied with the recognised answer, and we talked agreeably enough during the rest of the dinner.

I had once been fool enough to confess to my hostess an interest in palmistry. It was absolutely untrue. I had not the slightest interest or belief in it, and had only made the admission with the amiable purpose of encouraging a conversation that

showed signs of drooping; but now, in the midst of the hopeless after-dinner dulness, she bethought herself of this weak confession and asked me to tell someone's fortune. I thought that even this might be less depressing than if someone were to play or sing, so I asked for a hand to practise on. I said that I preferred a man's hand—ladies, though I did not say this, are apt to mistake the significance of all this palmistry business. He whom we may call the 'pseudo-Half-crowns' or 'pseudo-Stove-pipe' was standing near me. He showed no sign of a desire to be experimented on until his wife's voice came across the room like a bugle call.

'Give him your hand, John,' and an immense red thing shot out from him, as if worked by machinery.

I inspected the big hot appendage with owlish gravity, made some silly observations about the line of heart being better than the line of head, and so on—I should not have said this about his wife's hand—and then I observed, with curiosity, some corn-like callosities just where the fingers fit into the palm. The callosity was most strongly marked just at the root of the little finger.

'Thank you,' I said—I had been examining his left hand so far. 'May I have a look at the other hand?'

He held out that similar flab of flesh, and I observed that the callosities were no less strongly developed on the right than on the left hand.

'Yes,' I said 'Your line of life is very well marked, excellent. Your line of fate, I am sorry to tell you, has several breaks in it. One, a very severe one, appears to me very imminent at this moment; and I should say from what I see here—you don't mind my telling you, do you?' I asked, looking up at him.

'Not at all,' he replied indifferently.

'I should have said,' I went on, in a musing tone, 'I should have said—yes—of course I may be wrong, but I should have said that these lines indicated that you were—you must excuse me—leading a life of habitual deception.'

'Really, ha, ha, very good!' said he, laughing in a manner that I thought showed a little embarrassment.

'And I cannot help thinking,' I added, drawing him towards me and speaking to his private ear, 'that you are rather apt to —yes—to hold your golf club too firmly in the right hand. Try gripping it more strongly with the left.'

The flab of flesh was withdrawn from my fingers with an indignant snatch.

'I imagined that I had told you, Sir,' said my patient, with dignity, 'that I did not play the game of golf!'

'Golf, indeed!' his wife ejaculated; 'I should hope not, indeed. It just shows what nonsense all this palmistry is,' she observed to the politician in a voice that was obviously intended for my ears.

After that somebody did sing, but eventually the evening came to a close.

It was about two days after this dinner-party that I was coming out of my office in Old Broad Street when I found myself violently charged by a lady who had just rushed down the steps of the next house but one.

'Bless my soul, ma'am,' I exclaimed, 'where are you going to?'

We had mutually pulled up at the shock of meeting, and the next instant I recognised the lady as the identical person *à l'impératrice* whom I had taken down to dinner at the Websters'. She was in a state of almost tearful disorder, to which, as I should have supposed, no conceivable calamity could have reduced such a person. She was able to recognise me, however, and I persuaded her to come up to my office to compose herself while I should try whether something could be done to relieve her distress. Then, for the first time, I noticed that she was accompanied by a rather pretty young lady.

The story that my friend at length sufficiently composed herself to tell me was as follows:—

The young lady who accompanied her was her niece, come up for a few days from the country. Having an idle morning at their disposal, they had determined to take Mr. Smithers—him of the rubicund face and the calloused hands—by surprise at his office in the City, to make him give them luncheon, show them the Guildhall pictures, and so home. The items of the programme achieved themselves well enough until their arrival at Mr. Smithers's office. There they were met by one of the partners.

'Mr. Smithers in? Oh, dear no. Mr. Smithers never comes here now!'

'Never comes here now? Why, he leaves home every morning!'

'He never comes here, my dear madam. Mr. Smithers has retired for more than eighteen months from any active share in the business.'

Naturally it needed a little more than this simple and single statement of the case to bring its truth home to the distracted understanding of Mrs. Smithers, and it was only at the moment of its full significance bursting upon her that she had hurried

down the office stairs and plumped incontinently into my arms in Old Broad Street.

The while that the poor lady unfolded her lengthy tale of woe I found myself involved in considerable perplexity. Though I had not the slightest doubt of my ability to clear up all her difficulties very shortly, yet my social sense revolted at the idea of revealing a fellow club-man's secret, even though that fellow club-man had treated me shabbily, as I thought, at the Websters' party, both in declining my acquaintance and refusing me his confidence. The lady, however, had intimated (by means of certain nods and hints, and glances in the direction of her niece, which I understood to imply that the girl's presence forbade more direct reference to the husband's conduct) that she believed the erring Smithers to be erring so very much more grossly than I supposed him to be, that I concluded at length that I should be doing a kindness equally to husband as to wife by informing her of my conception of the truth.

For the moment, however, in the interests of the future domestic happiness of the Smithers family, I thought it well to dissemble the full extent of my cognisance.

'I believe, Mrs. Smithers,' I contented myself with saying, 'that if you will allow me I can conduct you to your husband.'

The lady, hearing this, began to exhort me, with some revival of her lost imperial manner, to tell me at once where her husband was; but I dallied with this question, telling her I could not be certain, that I had mistaken his identity once, and so forth.

For, while I felt a pity for Mrs. Smithers, I felt a lively compassion for the unfortunate and rubicund Mr. Smithers too. After all, one has to be true to one's sex in these delicate matters. I desired to hand over Mr. Smithers to his lady before she should have recovered the imperial manner in its full ferocity. In the meantime I persuaded her to eat some luncheon, and then conducted her and her niece to the London Bridge railway station. I took tickets, and escorted them to the train.

A journey of some twenty minutes, only enlivened by Mrs. Smithers's persistent efforts to make me break my policy of silence, brought us to our goal.

'Where are you taking us to?' the lady asked in a broken-spirited way, as I conducted them from the station out on to a large common.

'To your husband,' I replied shortly; and she followed me with a strange docility.

'What is that building?' she paused to ask presently.

'That is the Golf Club-house,' I said.

'Do they play that horrid game here?'

'Yes,' I said, 'some people do.'

Presently, in the distance, I perceived the unmistakable and portly figure of 'Old Stove-pipe' towering over a sea of whins. He came striding gloriously through their golden blossoms, swinging his club joyously as he went. Then, all of a sudden——

Have you ever watched a jaunty but cowardly little dog prancing along the road, unaware of the neighbourhood of a bigger, of its own species, which is crouching in wait for it? Suddenly it catches sight of its foe lying *perdu*, and in a moment —in the twinkling of an eye—is changed from the audacious, prancing cur to a creature shrinking, trembling, cowering, with its tail between its legs. If you have ever seen this instructive but not uncommon spectacle, it will assist you in realising the sudden and very complete change that overcame the joyous aspect of Mr. Smithers as he caught sight of his approaching wife. The man seemed to shrink visibly into but a portion of his former self. His club ceased swinging instantly. For a moment he looked this way and that, as though he would seek refuge in flight. The next moment his manhood reasserted itself, and he came on steadily but timorously to meet us.

On her part, Mrs. Smithers had stopped dead short. For a second or two she seemed to have a difficulty in recognising, in this Hyde in shooting jacket, the blameless Jekyll that went forth every morning in fine broadcloth from the domestic door. She spoke no word as Mr. Smithers came to us, wearing a weak imitation of a smile on his round face.

'Well, my dear,' he stammered. 'Well, I'm—I'm so glad to see you.'

Mrs. Smithers answered him nothing, silently terrible in her wrath.

'It's—it's a nice day, isn't it?' he said, wiping his brow.

Then Mrs. Smithers led him quietly aside, and I thought it best to absorb myself in conversation with the young lady.

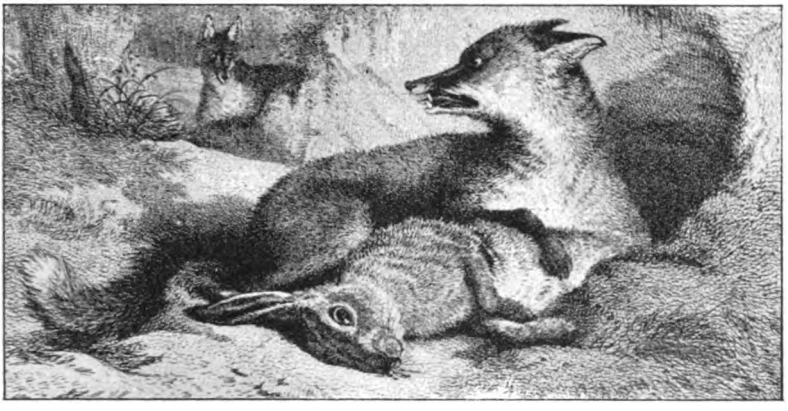
What it was precisely that Mrs. Smithers said to him was never known. His opponent had taken a seat at some distance, and two couples had passed them before Mr. Smithers was allowed to continue his game. It says much for his serenity of nature that he did not, by all accounts, play the remainder of that round noticeably ill. Meanwhile I escorted Mrs. Smithers and her niece back to the railway station, where by a lucky chance they soon found a train up to town. As I said good-bye to them the lady had so far composed herself as to be able to

thank me courteously for the trouble I had been at to recover her lost husband; but I could not resist the temptation of punishing her for her contempt of my palmistry by saying as the train moved off:

'I assure you it is quite true, Mrs. Smithers, he *does* grip too tight with the right hand.'

I have nothing much in the way of a moral to add to this simple story. I have now, I think, made sufficiently clear the solution of that interesting problem in philology which it was the purpose of this paper to discuss—the manner in which the vocabulary of our language has come to be enriched by the addition of the verb to 'stove-pipe.' When a man goes forth from his house of business, or of the domestic affections, crowned in that glory of civilisation, the high hat—of which we are celebrating the centenary this very year—and is seen travelling golf-wards with that ill-assorted head-gear, that man, you may depend upon it, is 'stove-piping.' He is persuading somebody—the wife of his bosom, or his partner in business—that he is intent on fulfilling some important engagement, when in reality he is bent on enjoying himself in a round of golf. Now a little of this sort of deception is pardonable, and perhaps, in certain cases, even necessary—I do not wish to assume the position of too stern a moralist—but 'Old Half-crowns,' who for ever after was called by the caddies' sobriquet of 'Stove-pipe,' carried the thing too far. For eighteen solid months he had been putting this deception in practice every week-day. The discovery, the inevitable discovery of his guilt has sown the seeds of suspicion in many a household, so that the top hat, which formerly was accepted as a ready guarantee of business intentions, has assumed the character of a possible 'blind' and an agitation is even now in progress for its general abolition. There is no end of the misery to which the extravagant practices of 'Old Stove-pipe' may conceivably be leading.

For the information of those who are interested in his subsequent history, it may be noted that some sort of compromise appeared to be arrived at in the domestic crisis. 'Old Stove-pipe' now golfs three days a week regularly, instead of the former six. He comes down by train in the disgraceful old cap and shooting coat which he used to don in the club-house; but the nickname of 'Stove-pipe' has been fastened upon him indelibly, and he may perhaps feel a certain satisfaction, in spite of his misdemeanours, in being one of the very few men who can boast of having added a new word to the language.



OLD SPORTING PRINTS

BY HEDLEY PEEK

No. IX.

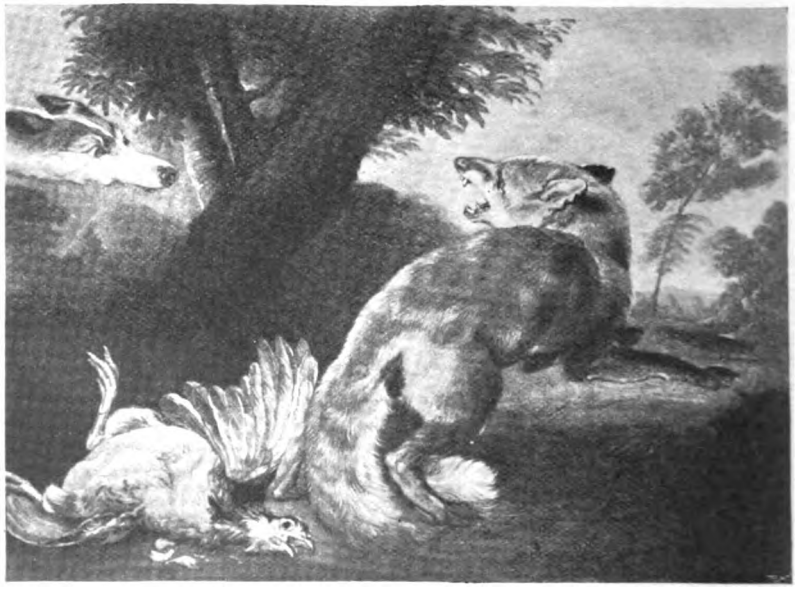
FOX-HUNTING

It may seem strange to some of my readers that the fox has taken so long coming to the front in Old Sporting Prints. The fault is, however, none of mine. Whatever the sportsmen were after, the fox was certainly little drawn by artists before the end of the seventeenth century; but as soon as the run began the field became crowded indeed. So much was this the case, that for the convenience and pleasure of all concerned it will be necessary to thin it considerably. Those who show inexperience in their art must fall out of the ranks, while men whose names even carry weight will receive less consideration than was once accorded them.

In previous articles, what I believe to have been the general view of fox-hunting from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries may be found, together with my reasons for having formed these conclusions. There are a few isolated exceptions where the fox was hunted during this time in an orthodox manner; but if we notice the counties or districts where this custom then prevailed we shall find the reason. As long as deer could be had the fox was ignored; but when the hare alone remained as a rival, some of the more adventurous spirits, tired

of a gallop which led no whither, and thinking of the straight line of the fast fading hart, fell back upon the fox for consolation. And what a consolation he became! Instead of bursting away, and leaving his pursuers hopelessly distanced, it was now possible, with the help of an improved breed of horses and hounds, to keep somewhere near him. When thus pressed, instead of running a ring, after the manner of his lesser rival, he could, at reduced speed, equal the stag in his straight course to some distant, favourite retreat.

As his qualities became better known and appreciated his fame spread through the greater part of Europe, and in less than



No. 1

fifty years English, French, German, Italian, and Dutch artists had immortalised him in nearly every act of his sporting, not to mention his domestic, life.

This revolution in the fox's favour did not take place without strong opposition from certain quarters. In most of the hunting literature of the eighteenth century we find this innovation severely condemned by all the more conservative sportsmen. They still refer to the fox, when comparing him with the hare, in language by no means devoid of contempt; while, strange as it may seem, the abuse showered on fox-hunters by these old-

fashioned critics resembles, nearly word for word, the modern attacks so often hurled at followers of the carted deer. The fox-hunter was taunted with being possessed of but one idea—to ride down his neighbour; with an utter lack of interest in the working

No. 2

quality of hounds; with selecting a stinking chase, which left behind an odour so strong that any cur would suffice. Some satirists even went so far as to say that the riders ought to be able to pick out the trail for themselves without any further assistance than that provided by their own noses.

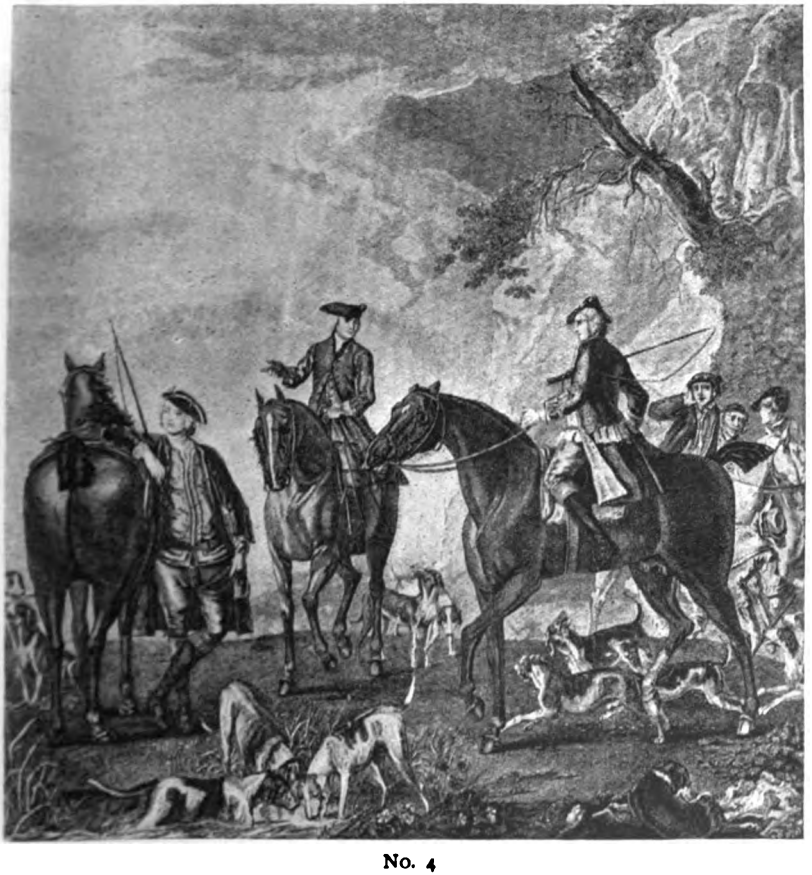
A modern master of foxhounds must often regret that the fox has so rapidly developed a new art of protection, by which it is able,

No. 3

at the present day, frequently to keep the scent very much to itself.

I propose in this article to give a selection of prints mostly executed in the early part of the eighteenth century, which show how the rapid development of fox-hunting appeared in Art.

No. 1 is reproduced from a mezzotint engraved by Charles Turner from a picture painted by Franz Snyders, the Dutch painter, a short account of whose life and work has previously been given. Where this picture was when Turner engraved it



No. 4

is, as far as I know, a mystery, but probably it was, and still is, in some private collection.

The picture was probably painted about 1640, and if it represents a fox-hunt, would be one of the earliest examples we have; but there is little justification for such a supposition. The hound's head (if we allow for a slight softening peculiar to Turner's mezzotint work) is identical with one of Snyders' stag-

hounds, and the painter has in all probability here only represented a byplay in some stag-hunt. The young hound, having been diverted from its true scent by the trail of a fox, seems hardly less surprised than the scared animal, thus unexpectedly deprived of his stolen meal. The expressions on the faces of the hound, the fox, and the bird are more full of caricature than we

No. 5

should expect to find in Snyders' work, and it would be interesting to know where the original of this picture is, and to see if this quality is equally marked in the painting. Even celebrated engravers have been known to take liberties with the original design.

No. 2 is an engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar, many of whose works, together with the account of his tragic history, are already known to my readers. This picture appeared in an illustrated edition of 'Æsop's Fables,' published 1665-66, and may, or may not, have been originally designed for the book. It was probably executed before the other three illustrations of fox-hunting by Barlow which I reproduced when reviewing Blome's 'Gentlemen's

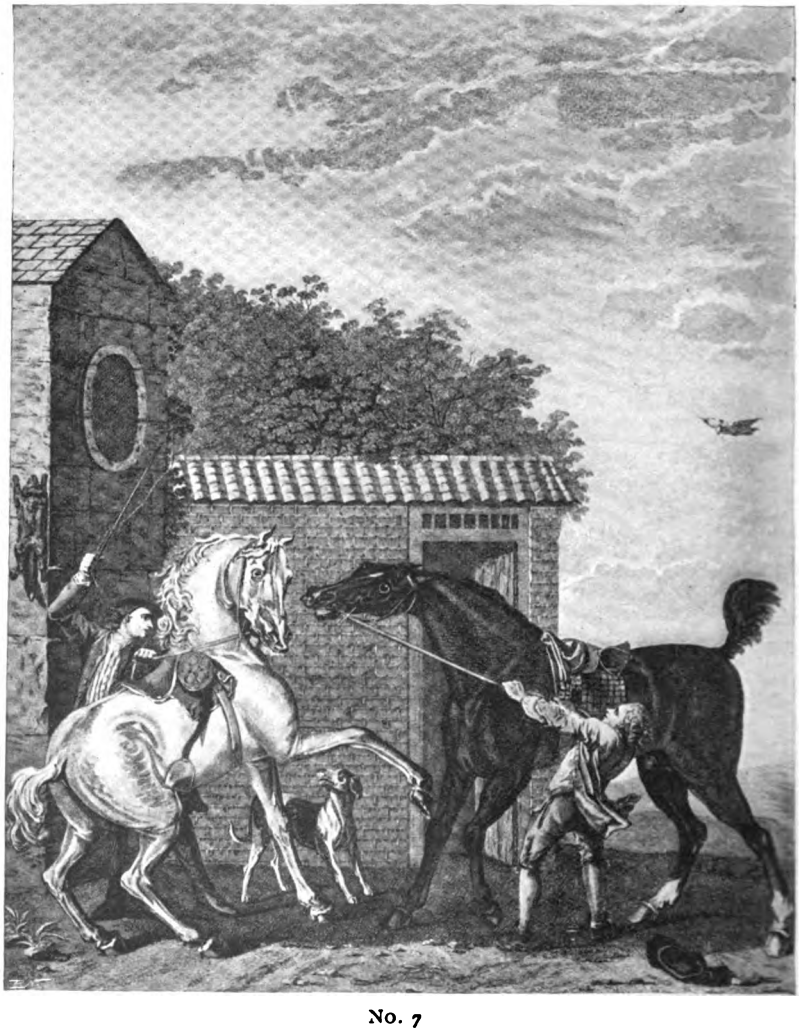
No. 6

Recreation,' and the scene is also laid in the winter. With the exception of these four prints, and one or two others which I reproduced in the 'Poetry of Sport,' there is little to be found relating to fox-hunting till the close of the seventeenth century.

From all accounts that I can find, though fox-hunting had begun to flourish in the northern and midland counties, and still

earlier in certain parts of France, it did not become general till the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The question has often been asked, Who kept the first pack of foxhounds in England? That is to say, who kept a pack for



No. 7

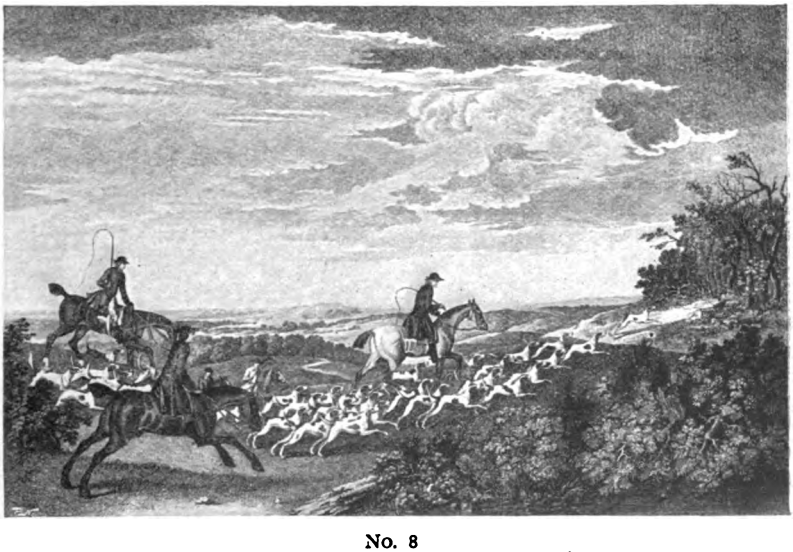
the sole purpose of hunting the fox, not who hunted the fox with harriers or with hounds kept chiefly for stag-hunting? Many writers have endeavoured to answer this question. Some have said that Lord Arundel started the fashion about 1690; others, that Thomas Boothby, of Tooley Park, Leicester, hunted the first pack, and continued to hunt them for fifty-five years. If so,

this sportsman, who was born in 1677 and died in 1752, must have started his pack not later than 1697, at the age of twenty, and hunted to the day of his death.

But, leaving out the debated point, which will probably never be decided—Who first entered a pack of foxhounds pure and simple?—I should think there is little doubt that William Draper was one of the first true fox-hunting squires.

Although an authority gives the date of his birth as 1650, I fancy there is no doubt that the print here produced (No. 3) is correct; and as the original picture was painted by Charles Philips in 1736, and represented the great lover of fox-hunting at the age of sixty-six, we must presume that the date of his birth was 1670.

This picture is of great interest. Not only does it show one of the most typical fox-hunting squires, but it gives a faithful representation of the costume of the time. We see here the huntsman's cap in its first form of development. It was made of strong, thickly padded velvet, but was not stiffened; and though this is the first representation known to me, it became very



No. 8

general thirty to forty years later. The squire's long hunting coat was of a dark drab colour, fastened round the waist with a leather belt, from which we see suspended a pair of hound couplers. He holds in his gauntleted hand the first form of lash-whip, which came into use before the close of the previous century. It resem-

bles the present country carter's type, or still more the instrument used by Tyrolese car-drivers.

A short account of Draper's life, taken from the notes to Somerville's 'Chase,' republished in 1807, will give an excellent idea of the best type of a fox-hunting squire:—

'In the old, but now ruinous, mansion of Beswick Hall, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, lived once the well-known William Draper, Esq., who bred, fed, and hunted the staunchest pack of foxhounds in Europe. On an income of 700*l.* a year, and no more, he brought up, frugally and creditably, eleven sons and daughters, kept a stable of right good English hunters and kennel of true-bred foxhounds, besides a carriage with horses suitable to carry out my lady and the daughters to church and other places of goodly resort. He lived in the old honest style of his country, killing every month a good ox of his own feeding, and priding himself on maintaining a goodly, substantial table, but with no foreign kickshaws. In his humour he was very joky and facetious, having always some pleasant story, both in the field and in the hall, so that his company was much sought

No. 9

after by persons of good condition. His stables and kennels were kept in such excellent order that sportsmen regarded them as schools for huntsmen and grooms, who were glad to come there without wages merely to learn their business. When they had

got good instruction, he then recommended them to other gentlemen, who wished for no better character than that they were recommended by Esquire Draper. He was always up, during the hunting season, at four o'clock in the morning, and mounted

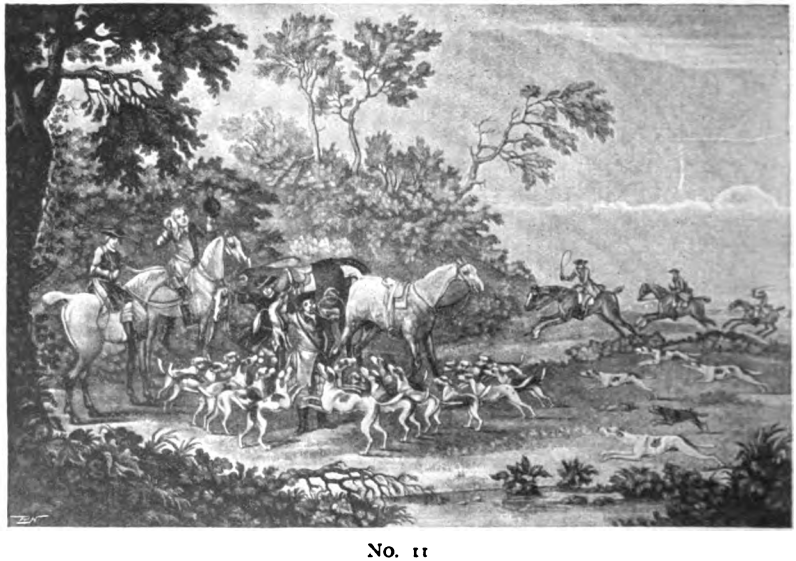
No. 10

on one of his goodly nags at five, himself bringing forth his hounds, who knew every note of their old master's voice. In the field he rode with good judgment, avoiding what was unnecessary, and helping his hounds when they were at fault. His daughter Di, who was equally famous at riding, was wont to assist him, cheering the hounds with her voice. She died at York in a good old age, and, what was wonderful to many sportsmen who dared not follow her, she died with whole bones in her bed. After the fatigues of the day, whence he generally brought away a couple of brushes, he entertained those who would return to him, which was sometimes thirty miles distance, with old-English hospitality. Good old October home-brewed was the liquor drunk, and his first fox-hunting toast, "All the brushes in Christendom." At the age of eighty years this famous squire died as he had lived, for he died on horseback. As he was about to give some instruction to a gentleman who was rearing a pack of foxhounds, he was seized with a fit, and, dropping from his old favourite pony, he expired. There was no one, rich or poor, in his neighbourhood but what lamented his death, and the foxes were the

only things that had occasion to be glad that Squire Draper was no more.'

Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7 are taken from P. C. Canot's engravings of John Wootton's pictures.

J. Wootton was a pupil of Jan Wyck. He seems to have first found fame at Newmarket by painting or drawing the celebrated racehorses of the day. He soon became one of the most popular artists of his time, and received high prices for his work. The four examples reproduced were probably painted from 1740 to 1750, during the latter period of his work, and when he devoted his chief attention to hunting scenes and landscape. In the latter he was unsuccessful, but in the former he showed considerable



No. 11

spirit, and his work can be relied upon for truthfulness in detail. Most of his paintings are on a large scale, and may often be found in the old collections, such as the Longleat, Althorp, Dytchley, and Blenheim collections. There are also some good examples of his work in the Royal collection. He gave up work through failure of sight in 1761, and died in 1765.

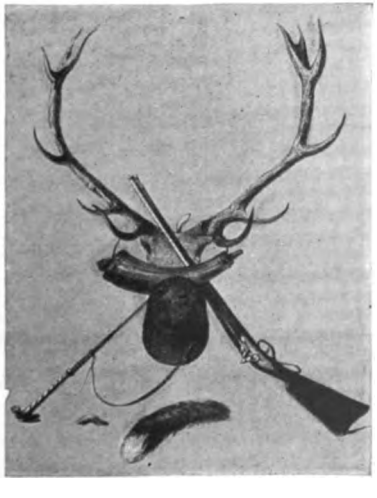
Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11 are engraved from paintings by James Seymour, who was born in London in 1702, and died in 1752. The first three prints are fairly common, but most of his paintings are little known. He was an accurate draughtsman but a weak colourist. The engravings, though the best that have been executed, do injustice to his work. It is very interesting to

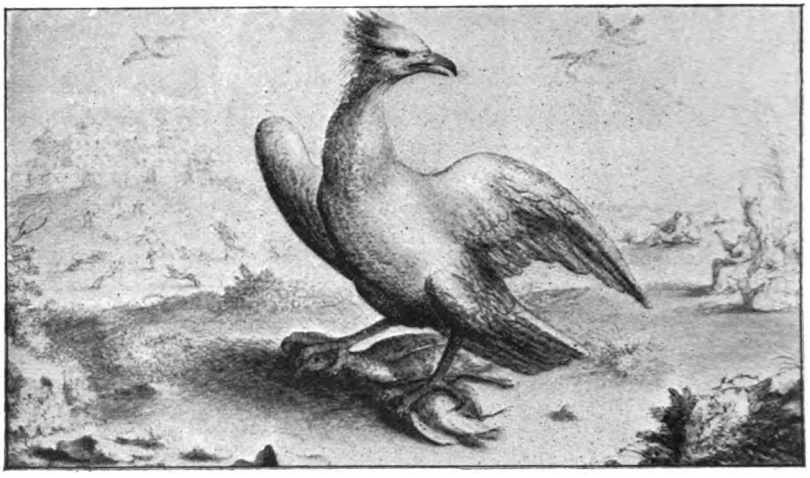
No. 12

compare these illustrations with those of Wootton, which are nearly contemporary, Seymour having lived and studied hunting in the south of England, Wootton in the north and midlands. The lash-whips in Nos. 4 and 6 are the same as the one represented in the hand of W. Draper, the Yorkshireman. The curve-topped whip, which at this time became common for driving, seems to have had in the south also a short spell of fashion with huntsmen; but I have never noticed an instance in which it appears in any picture painted by an artist who had studied the sport outside the home counties. Its obvious inconvenience must soon have dismissed the temporary fad.

No. 12 is reproduced from a large folded engraving in the British Museum. This work was executed about 1760 by John June, and is, I fancy, little known. It is chiefly valuable as showing in great detail the costume of the period. It will be noticed that (as in illustration No. 6) a black page is holding the master's circular horn while he rewards the hounds with what we may presume is intended for a fox, but in this case more nearly resembles a young lamb.

These illustrations are some of the earlier examples of eighteenth-century work. From 1760 to 1800 endless prints, good, bad, and indifferent, dealing with fox-hunting were published. The fashion had reached its height; the deer were virtually extinct; the hare's supporters were less numerous, and the voice of the carping fox-hunting critic was heard no more in the land.





THROUGH THE BLACK FOREST AWHEEL

BY A. R. QUINTON

Of all the wooded districts of Germany, none presents so many attractions to the cycling tourist as the Black Forest. The cheerful valleys, thickly studded with trim villages, quiet hamlets, and snug farmhouses; transparent brooks rushing swiftly through the dales, and turning the wheels of mills and factories; the refreshing shade and sweet scent of the fir forests that give the name to the district; a pure, exhilarating air, and a population good-humoured and industrious, as well as picturesque in their dress, who are always kind and courteous in their bearing to strangers—all these things combine to make the Black Forest an ideal touring ground. But what of the roads? Well, they are, as a rule, magnificent. The country is hilly no doubt, entailing a certain amount of walking if you wish to enjoy yourself, and not make a toil of pleasure. But on the steepest ascents the scenery is generally the finest, and there is every inducement to loiter on the way. It is, indeed, a country for rest and idleness, with no long distances to cover, with something new and interesting to observe at every turn in the road; and no difficulty need be apprehended about finding quarters for the night when the rider feels disposed to halt. Even in the villages, the inns, if homely, are always clean and comfortable, whilst in the towns

and principal resorts the hotel accommodation is all that can be desired. What more can the most exacting tourist need?

We were a party of four, and we made our start from Strasburg, travelling *viâ* Paris in order to avoid the vexatious Customs formalities affecting cycles which, until quite recently, were in force in Belgium. These, I believe, have now been removed, or at least modified, and the more direct route through Brussels is open to cyclists. Arriving early in Strasburg, we spent the morning in exploring this interesting old city. Although a busy commercial centre, there is still much that is quaint to observe in the many mediæval dwellings, with their Gothic gables and façades, and exquisite wood carvings. And then the grand old cathedral, of course that had to be inspected, as well as the famous astronomical clock; and, like good tourists, we waited patiently in a large crowd to hear it strike, as well as to see the cock which flaps its wings, stretches its neck, and crows, and the Twelve Apostles troop out, and move round a figure of the Saviour. No doubt these were wonderful pieces of mechanism in their time, but in our days of marvellous automatic devices and scientific development they are rather put in the shade.

After lunching in the Münster Platz, we mounted our wheels and rode through a flat and rather uninteresting country to

Offenburg, where we entered the Sonne Hotel for a cup of tea. Making our request in the best selected sentence which we could command, it was a little disconcerting to be answered in good English; we felt that we had wasted our best German. We

very soon discovered, however, that at most of the hotels at which we alighted the landlord was better conversant with our language than we were with his, so that we reserved our carefully prepared phrases for more out-of-the-way places where English was not spoken. Invariably we found the natives most ready to help us out of any difficulty, and to tolerate our imperfect mastery of their tongue. In the centre of the broad street of Offenburg is a statue of Sir Francis Drake, who is credited with the introduction of the potato into Europe. A potato plant in the hand of a gallant sea-captain seems at first sight somewhat derogatory to his prowess; but may not this humble plant, the nourisher of nations, be rightly deemed worthy of as much honour as the sword, which devours them?

Our first stage was a short one, as we were tired with the long railway journey from London and sightseeing at Strasburg. So we put up for the night at the old-world village of Gengenbach, which lies at the foot of extensive vine-clad hills. Its walls and gates speak of its bygone glories, and the handsome old Benedictine Abbey denotes the origin of the town. Here acquaintance was made with the storks, whose untidy nests on the chimney-tops are such a characteristic feature in German villages; and from the top of the Nigelturm we obtained a fine view of the surrounding country, embracing Kinzig valley, by which we were to travel on the morrow. The scenery of this valley grows in beauty as you ascend: the vineyards soon give place to other crops, which in their turn yield the acclivities to forest trees; and it was then that we realised that we had fairly entered the Black Forest. While so far the houses of the peasantry had consisted of one-story cottages, quite destitute of ornamentation, they now began to assume the ideal Black Forest type—with thatched roofs projecting over the balconies which surround the buildings. Passing through Biberach, Steinach (of which I give a sketch), and Halsach, we soon arrived at Hausach, one of those little towns which so often grew up at the gates of the mediæval castle, or at the foot of the steep which it crowned, being composed at first almost exclusively of the dwellings of the baron's retainers. Now-a-days it is one of the chief centres of the timber trade. The trees which are felled on the hill-sides are floated down the streams to the Rhine, where they are made into rafts, and so conveyed to Holland for shipment.

Here we left the Kinzigthal, and, bearing due southward, entered the beautiful valley of the Gutach; and he must indeed be hard to please who does not appreciate the grand scenery

from this point to Triberg. The hay harvest was in full swing at the time of our visit; everywhere on the route the peasants were busy gathering in their crops, and conveying them to their homesteads in hand-carts or primitive little waggons drawn by cows or oxen. The pretty little town of Hornberg nestles between the steeply sloping sides of the narrow valley, dominated by an ancient castle perched on a precipitous rock above the town. It is a wonderfully picturesque place, and its many smart hotels testify that it is now a favourite summer resort. We ascended the Schloss to enjoy the magnificent view which it commands.

STEINACH

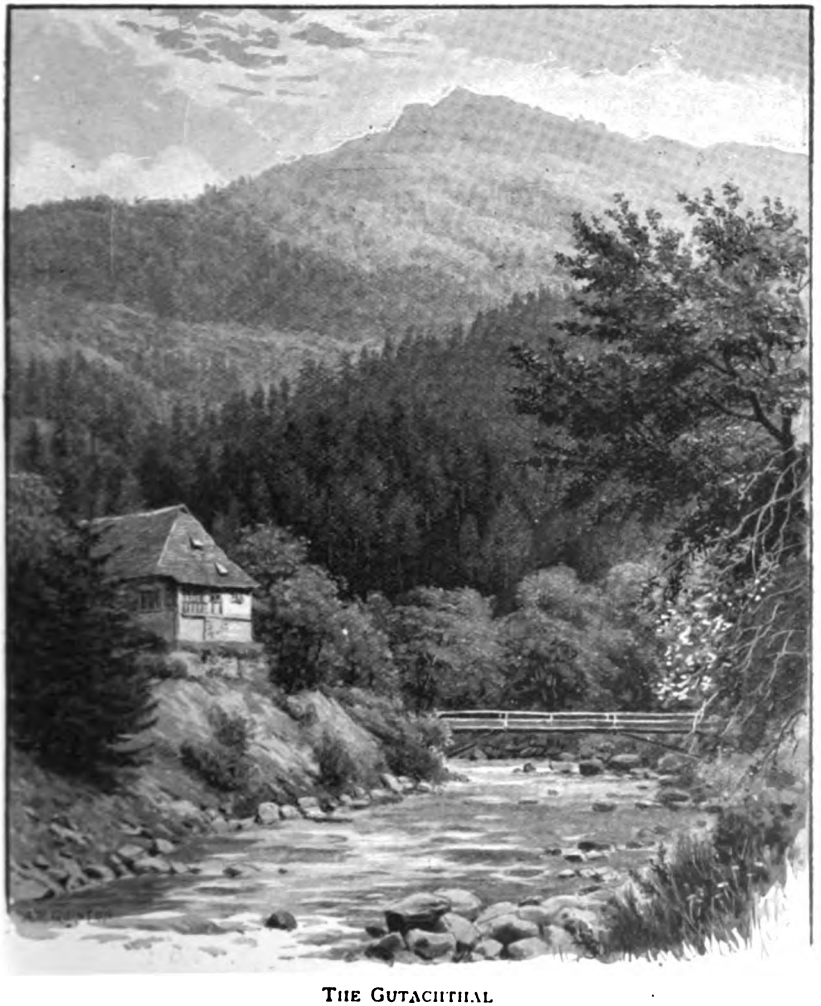
Whilst resting on the summit, a large party of schoolboys made their appearance, many of whom proved to be English. They came from the neighbouring Moravian College at Königsfeld, and were out for a holiday excursion attended by one of their tutors. A day or two later we visited them at their school. From Hornberg to Triberg is a climb of 800 feet, but the wonderfully smooth surface and easy gradient of the road enabled us to work up very comfortably, and enjoy the succession of lovely and ever-changing pictures which this route commands. Many glimpses can also be obtained of the railway, which has been carried up the valley by an extraordinary piece of engineering

skill—winding, like a snake, now on this side, now on that, amongst the wooded hills. In eighteen miles there are nearly thirty tunnels, and in more than one place the line doubles back on itself, making a huge loop, so that from the road below one sees apparently three lines of rail terraced one above the other on the mountain-side.

Triberg lies in the very heart of the Black Forest, and, as a tourist centre, is perhaps one of the best known and most frequented. A large proportion of its shops are devoted to the sale of clocks—the manufacture of which forms the principal industry of the district—and the Gewerbe-Halle contains an interesting collection of the different articles manufactured in the neighbourhood. We took up our quarters at the Sonne, where we received every attention from the English-speaking landlord. A thunder-storm disturbed our rest in the early part of the night, and later on the whole town was roused by an alarm of fire. They have a humorous way of collecting the members of the volunteer fire-brigade, by blowing a bugle under your window; and when they are tired of that performance they send a kettle-drum to take its place. It certainly appeared to be very effective on this occasion, for all the inhabitants had their heads out of the windows, firemen issued from many of the doors and ran down the street in quite a stream. It proved to be a brewery that was alight, but no great harm was done after all. Our landlord turned out as a volunteer; but, as he told us afterwards, he left the others to do the work of extinguishing the fire, and retired to a neighbouring beer-halle. 'They insure their houses against fire,' he said, 'and then they try to put the fire out. Why don't they let them burn?'

Of course, the great lion of Triberg is its waterfall. The Gutach, which has hitherto been flowing gently through meadows, suddenly finds itself on the verge of a precipice. In seven long strides it descends the mountain-side, which is over 500 feet in height, and exhibits a succession of lovely cascades amongst the magnificent pine-trees which form the setting of the fall. The effect is romantic in the extreme. Of course, the whole of the falls cannot be seen from any single spot, but the numerous paths and bridges which have been carried along its course enable the visitor to admire it from various coigns of vantage with comparatively little exertion. The enterprising proprietor of the Schwarzwald Hotel illuminates the falls every evening by electric light; but we were not tempted to view the effect of this improvement of art upon nature: daylight was good enough for us.

We left Triberg in the afternoon, when the sun was blazing fiercely on our backs—not the best time of day for climbing such an ascent as that which lay between us and St. Georgen, by the valley of the Nussbach. But what a lovely ride it was! The



THE GUTACHTHAL

road winds in zigzags up the steep slopes of hills which are almost Alpine in their wildness; and the vale below is one rich carpet of verdure, intersected by little brooks that glitter in the sunshine. Pretty cottages adorn the slopes, patches of forest crown the projecting rocks, and tempting paths lead in all direc-

tions up the mountain-side. Landscapes possessing greater charms than these it would be difficult to find. A pretty picture is presented by the little chapel in the cemetery of Nussbach, standing out conspicuously as it does, with its whitewashed walls, from the green surface of the valley.

At Sommerau we were nearly 3,000 feet above sea-level, and on the summit of the pass, which the Rössle Inn straddles so completely that the water falling on one side of its roof finds its way to the Danube and the Black Sea, while the raindrops which trickle down the other side flow on to the Rhine and eventually to the German Ocean.

Now began the descent, which usually comes to compensate the cyclist for a toilsome climb. St. Georgen is a busy clock-manufacturing place, the main street of which is so steep that it requires very careful riding. Peterzell comes next, where we forsook the easily descending main road in order to pay a passing visit to the village of Königsfeld, a settlement of the Moravian Brethren, situated three miles off, in the midst of magnificent pine forests. Peace, health, and contentment have made their home here; and he who wants to enjoy rest and retirement, unbroken and undisturbed by intrusion, to be lodged and fed at a nominal charge, and to breathe the healthiest air in Europe for nothing, will find this little Moravian settlement a boon and a blessing. Here we renewed the acquaintance of some of the boys whom we had met upon the heights of Hornberg, and were shown over the college which was their temporary home. The scholars seemed most happy in their surroundings, and explained their system of instruction, taking us through their extensive school premises with great pride and good humour.

With some feelings of regret we turned our backs upon this quiet retreat, and rejoined the high-road a little short of Villingen. This is an old and venerable town, still partly surrounded with walls and gates, which have successfully resisted sieges in the Thirty Years' War and the War of the Spanish Succession. It had been our intention to reach Donaueschingen for the night; but the cyclist proposes and his tyre interposes. So it happened in our case. The obstinate pertinacity with which the air insisted on escaping from the pneumatic of one of our cycles caused us frequent delays, so that we were constrained to find what quarters we could at the village of Dürrheim, seven miles short of our proposed destination. This was no great cause for regret, however, for the good people at the Gasthaus von Kreuz made us very comfortable, in spite of our having to wash in a

pie-dish; and our bill was by no means a long one. Next morning, when I turned out to inspect the weather, I beheld the owner of the refractory tyre with his machine in the horse-trough in front of the inn, searching for the cause of leakage. Temporary repairs followed; but that wheel continued to be a source of trouble and vexation throughout the remainder of our tour. When will the perfect tyre be invented?

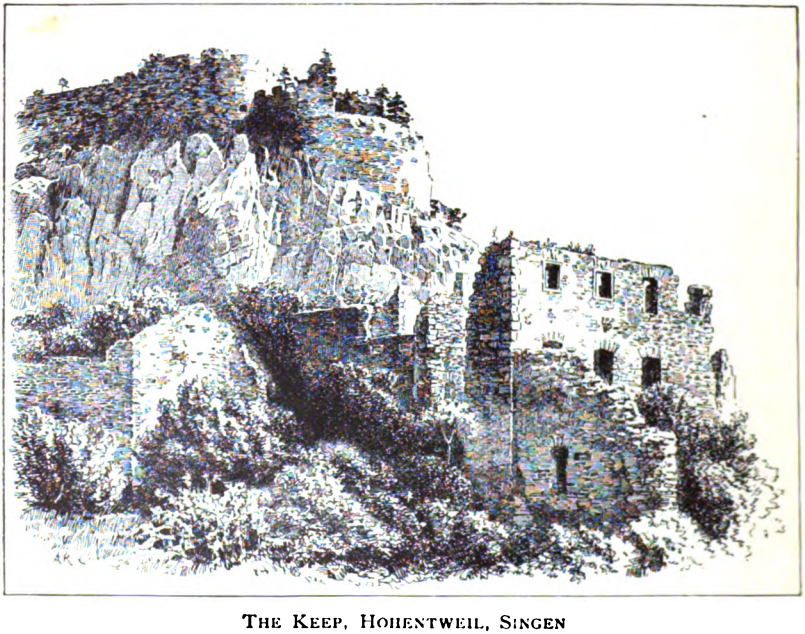
We reached Donaueschingen in the rain, and tried hard to keep our spirits up by visiting the Donauquelle, close by the

SAW MILLS, GUTACHTHAL

palace of the Prince of Fürstenberg. This is a round, walled-in basin, with a spring of clear water, which is led by a subterranean channel to the Brigach, about 100 feet distant. No one would imagine that this was the birthplace of a mighty river, but we were forced to believe the inscription which styles this spring the 'Source of the Danube.' The bad weather induced us to take the rail on to Schaffhausen; but we left our bicycles at the station at Singen, where we changed trains, to avoid taking them over the frontier into Switzerland. A cyclist without his machine is rather a helpless creature; so when we arrived at Schaffhausen,

and found that it still rained heavily and we had not an umbrella between us, there was nothing for it but to engage a closed carriage to drive us to the Falls of the Rhine, which we were determined to see, weather or no weather. It was rather a melancholy expedition; but we had our duty to perform, and we would not shirk it. So we slopped through the rain, and saw the mighty cataract—or as much of it as the misty atmosphere would allow us to see—drank our glass of beer on the terrace (to satisfy the waiter), then drove back again to the railway station; and so to Singen.

The country lying between Donaueschingen and Singen is of an entirely different character from that through which we had



THE KEEP, HOHENTWEIL, SINGEN

just ridden. We had left the steep hills and pine-woods behind, and entered upon a comparatively flat district, known as the Hegau, from whose fertile plains rise lofty isolated conical rocks of volcanic origin, surmounted by castles which were once the strongholds of robber barons. There stands Neuhöwen; yonder are Hohenstoffeln, with its triple summit, Mägdeberg, Hohenkrähen, and—most imposing of all—Hohentweil, rising menacingly to a height of 2,265 feet above sea-level. We decided to scale this eminence, and started by an easy and gradual ascent for the summit. The

path grew steeper as we wound round the rock, and led through gates and across bridges to the ruins, which soon began to line the way on either side, and above which we found still more extensive ones crowning the pinnacle of the mound. After Hohentweil had been the seat of many noble families—at one time in the possession of the kingdom of Wurtemberg, and at another period used as a state prison—it eventually fell a prey to the French at the time of the Revolution, and the castle, which was once the most extensive building of the kind in Southern Germany, has since remained a shapeless heap of grass-grown ruins. But it is picturesque in all its desolation, and from the tower, which once belonged to the ancient chapel, a panorama opens which embraces the Tyrolese and Swiss Alps as far as Mont Blanc, with peaceful villages studding the verdant plain at our feet, and a wide expanse of glistening lakes between.

As it was our intention to travel homeward by Heidelberg and the Rhine, it was now necessary to retrace our wheelmarks as far as Hausach, in order to ascend the valley of the Wolfbach, and then descend the Murgthal to Baden. Such part of the journey as we had trained on the outward route we now rode, and then made use of the railway for that portion over which we had already cycled; but we were tempted to wheel a second time over that delightful stretch between Triberg and Hausach, and admired its romantic scenery all the more on a second acquaintance.

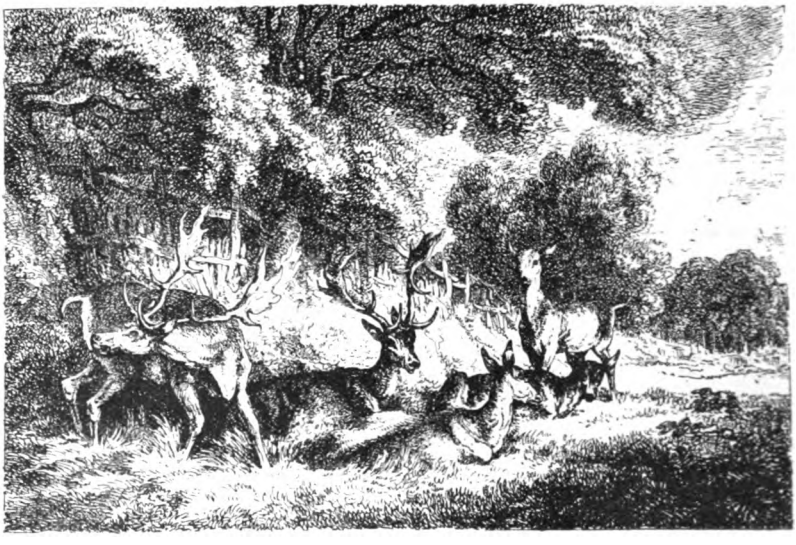
We followed the Kinzigthal as far as Wolfbach, an ancient and interesting town situated between abrupt mountains at the confluence of the Wolfbach and the Kinzig. Then we pedalled through a beautiful valley, only inferior in beauty to the Gutachthal, as far as Rippoldsau, stopping a little short of the latter place to dine in the tempting shade of a hotel garden which we espied by the wayside. Rippoldsau did not attract us. Its situation is charming, no doubt, in a rather narrow valley, hemmed in with densely wooded hills; but it was too full of visitors to suit our taste. It is, in fact, one of the most frequented and best organised of the Black Forest health-resorts, and tennis was being actively carried on in the hotel grounds as we passed through. The distance from Rippoldsau to Freudenstadt, as the crow flies, is only a little over five miles, but as a slight obstacle, in the shape of a mountain called the Kniebis, 3,190 feet high, has to be negotiated on the way, a much greater distance has to be covered than at first appears, and some very stiff climbing has to be reckoned with. The road is splendidly engineered, and the surface perfect, so that one of our party rode to the summit

without a dismount, but three of us preferred to walk two or three miles of the distance, and enjoyed more leisurely the romantic scenery through which the zigzag road winds amongst the pine-forests. Then came a grand run down to Freudenstadt, our destination for the night, another quaint old town, standing at an elevation of 2,380 feet. The next day being Sunday, numerous German cyclists arrived at our hotel to breakfast, having made an early start for their day's ride. We noticed that most of them carried whips on their handle-bars,

ASCENDING THE KNIEBIS

presumably to punish unruly dogs, but we never experienced any difficulty from this cause. There is a curiously constructed Protestant church in this town, with two naves at right angles to each other, in one of which the male and in the other the female members of the congregation sit, the altar and pulpit being placed at the angle. Outside the tower is a gallery on which musicians appeared in the early morning, and serenaded the town through brass instruments, like the Mohametan's call to prayer from the summit of a mosque.

Here our last stage through the Black Forest began, and the descent continued through a pleasant country, the scenery increasing in interest as the valley narrows near Schönmünzach, where the fir-trees grow right down to the water's edge, and even in the river-bed. The Murgthal from Schönmünzach to Gernsbach is wild and beautiful. The slopes are richly clothed with wood, huge granite boulders are scattered down their sides, whilst below the busy stream rushes on over its rocky bed, forming picturesque waterfalls, now and again, as it leaps down some chasm in its impetuous course. All too quickly our descending road carried us through this impressive valley; past Forbach, with its pretty church upon a hill; then Langenbrand, where the scenery is perhaps at its very best; and so through Weissenbach to Gernsbach, passing Schloss Eberstein, a mansion of ancient origin, situated on a commanding eminence, high above the Murg. Gernsbach was full of holiday folk in their Sunday clothes, and we were glad to get clear of its unridable paved streets. But a long and tedious ascent awaited us on the road to Baden. Everywhere the people were *en fête* that day, and it was with difficulty that we pushed our way through some of the crowded villages and entered the beautiful and popular watering-place of Baden, where our tour, so far as the Black Forest is concerned, terminated. We had undertaken no pioneering expedition, and consequently have had no startling adventures to relate. We had been content to follow well-known paths through a well-known country, and if we have had nothing new to tell the reader about this ideal touring-ground, we can at least urge him to go and see for himself those scenes which afforded us so much satisfaction and delight.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

For one writer on turf affairs who is inclined to depreciate a good horse, there are about twenty who magnify his merits with more or less extravagance, and about three who regard the question from a judicious standpoint. One is, no doubt, apt to be prejudiced for or against: you do or do not like the owner and his associates; the horse has disappointed or gratified you; you like or dislike the breed; for some reason or other you do not consider his merits impartially. Is Galtee More a great horse? Personally, I do not think he is. He most certainly did not stand out by himself last year before the Middle Park Plate as a great horse should have done, and his present reputation (I am writing just after the Derby) depends on his having beaten Velasquez at Epsom. What then is Velasquez? I have the very best possible authority for saying that last month Velasquez was tried and found to be precisely the same horse as he had been in the previous October. He should in that time have improved to an extent which students of the weight-for-age

table can easily calculate. He had not improved at all; and this is the horse that Galtee More beat. It does not seem to amount to so very much.

As for the much-disputed question whether Galtee More should be called an Irish horse, that I take is a point to be settled according to the taste and fancy of the disputant. The colt's sire and dam are as thoroughly English as any two animals in the Stud Book; their son chanced to be born in Ireland. Some persons consider that he is Irish because of the place of his birth; others hold that he is English because of his parentage. Suppose he had been born in Japan, would it have been right to describe him as a Japanese horse? There is no rule for this sort of thing: everybody decides such matters according to his own private and particular view of them. If a child were born in London of Ethiopian parents he would be an Englishman according to the 'Irish horse' Galtee More theory. He might not quite look the character by reason of his black face and woolly hair, but that I suppose would be a detail. The converse of this would also seem odd—to describe the progeny of English parents born in Zululand, say, as Zulus? That would be the case, nevertheless, if Galtee More is an Irish horse.

The mention of Irish horses reminds me that there is much dissatisfaction just now with the action of the Congested Districts Board in introducing hackneys into Ireland. The hackney is declared by his admirers to have excellent qualities. He steps up to his nose, for instance, which enormously gratifies people who are made happy by seeing horses stepping up to their noses. But he is very 'soft.' I shall have a number of letters from his friends saying that he is not, and, if I publish any of them, a number more from his enemies vowing that I am quite right, and that he is: which will bring us no forrarder. However, the opinion I have expressed very widely prevails, and it is urged with much alarm that the good old hunter blood for which Ireland is so deservedly famous cannot fail to be deleteriously affected. A committee is investigating the subject, and its disposition is, I hear, to adopt this view.

A very sensible letter appeared in the 'St. James's Gazette' the other day about racing in Australia. There are excellent sportsmen in the Colonies, they have good horses, and their jockeys are assuredly the boldest of the bold, if—as I am informed—lacking in the delicacy and *finesse* of horsemanship. But there are two things common in Australia which we do not have here, and because of their omission we are told, by a little body of scribes and by those who heed them, that we are woefully and absurdly behind the times. One of the details whose absence is deplored is the numbered saddle-cloth. On this is marked the number corresponding to that on the card and on the board, so that you can identify the horse by it instead of growing confused, as people often do, about the colours. It sounds well in theory, but how about practice? The field is starting, in a line more or less, the best part of a mile away from the spectator. He can make out the colours clearly enough, but what is the use of the numbered saddle-cloths? The field again approaches the stand, coming towards it; the horses can be identified by the riders' jackets, but the numbers are invisible. Three or four horses single themselves out and run home close together; one wins a neck, the third is beaten a head, the fourth close up; they are broadside on to the spectators. What is the use of numbered saddle-cloths which no one can see? You may be able to detect the number on the winner's cloth as he flashes past, but his body hides the other horses. This 'improvement' appears to be extremely stupid and confusing.

The other improvement which the dense English people will not adopt is the starting machine. The correspondent of the 'St. James's Gazette' had heard so much about it that he was curious to see how it worked; and he did see. What he saw was three horses knocked over. They got their heads caught in it somehow or other, and the accident was the consequence. But when it is used jockeys cannot fail to 'get off,' it is urged by advocates, and theoretically, again, this ought to be so. Only, it isn't. 'At Flemington, last March, three or four horses were left at the post, and did not start at all,' the writer states. Very often horses refuse to approach the odd-looking contrivance, and bolt in the opposite direction when it flies up in the air. It does not seem probable that Newmarket Heath will be studded with

starting machines. Personally, I think the horse's name on the saddle-cloth, where a few owners have adopted the practice of putting it, a mistake, because it is not in accordance with the idea of racing—the competition of sportsmen among themselves with the object of finding out which is the best horse, so bringing about the improvement of the breed. The new sportsman, it seems to me, becomes a showman, providing an exhibition for the amusement of the mob. It is one step from this to the self-conscious winning jockey bowing to public applause, forgetting that he is a servant who has skilfully done his duty for his employer, and assuming the attitude of a circus rider who has given a successful performance.

The vexed question of the 'follow on' at cricket is again being warmly discussed, without, however, the production of any new arguments; nor, indeed, does there seem anything new to be said about it. Either view is so convincing till the opposite one is stated. A side goes in and makes, say, 420. The other side goes in and makes 300, so it follows on. Is it not hard that the first team, which has been fielding energetically for hours in a hot sun, should have to continue? How can it be expected that the bowlers, of whom there may be a very limited proportion, can keep on in their best form? The old fashion of one side out the other side in had very much, no doubt, to recommend it, and a return to the original order of things is advocated by many cricketers. But, on the other hand, supposing that the first side gets its 420, and the opponents a hundred or so only, and time is growing short? The first eleven in the ante-follow-on days would go in again, and if they did not make a burlesque of cricket by getting out one after another on purpose, a drawn game would be the result. The best side would suffer for its excellence—would fail to win because it was too good! Is not that hard—and ridiculous also? There is the middle course of increasing the figures which bring about a follow on, but to what extent should they be altered? 200? That is a question which provokes more argument, and I am very glad that I have no voice in its settlement. One suggested solution is that the calculation should be based on the first innings; that if the side which went in second did not make half, or over a third, of the first side's score, it should follow on; and I am inclined to think that there is a good deal, a great deal indeed, to be said for this idea.

'Jane Austen: not the original' writes to me, affixing 'Yours achingly' to her name: 'Sir,—I am a disappointed woman. The world is hollow and my faith is weak. It was not always so. I used to believe in one thing, and that was you, Mr. Editor—*you*, as represented by the "BADMINTON MAGAZINE." My menkind are a sporting lot, and I heard it quoted on all sides and on all subjects till I grew to look upon it as a paper edition of George Washington. I read every number of it and I doubted nothing; I even credited Mr. Rapier with following his own good counsel on the subjects of gambling and betting. Could faith go further? After that it came easy to believe all that was written about the delights of "cycling for women." Amongst other things I read that this form of exercise caused the "middle-aged to glow with the glow of youth." The idea was pleasing (I am over thirty). I followed up the articles with avidity; according to them, a new world of pleasure was opening up before me; why had I delayed so long? I would lose no more time. I journeyed to Battersea Park and had my first lesson; it was the reverse of enjoyable, but I will be merciful and not harrow you by describing that or the succeeding ones; suffice to say, I persevered in spite of much pain and inconvenience, still trustful and hoping for my reward when once I could "ride" well. I can ride, but the reward is as far away as ever! I ask you, sir, can any reasonable person be expected to enjoy being perched on a scrap of leather between two wheels that won't stand up by themselves; to suffer agonies from the jolts and jars over every little bit of rough road, knowing that if she stops work for a second she is bound to come to grief, and with the dread of a punctured tyre and the consequent ignominy of having to lead the machine home, ever before her? And yet these are the "pleasures" you allow your contributors to extol and write miss-leading papers upon, thereby inducing me, and doubtless others, to waste many precious hours, and still more precious pounds (two sorts). Perhaps I ought to apologise for these ravings, but if you have ever known what it is to have your faith shattered and your nerves made weak, you may not refuse to spare me a grain of pity.' If soft words would comfort Miss Jane I would write them, but she implies that they would not, so I sympathise with her silently.

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
August 1897

GROUSE

BY THE HON. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY

WHY is it that there is something in the word 'grouse' which raises a thrill in the heart of every sportsman, and of a good many others with little claim to the title? It is certainly not any particular merit the grouse has as a test of the high qualities of the marksman, for I doubt whether any bird—even the hedge-row pheasant beloved by our ancestors—is quite so easy to shoot as a grouse rising to dogs after a steady point on the Twelfth of August. But your grouse has the advantage of the first start. The guns are brought out of 'dock' whether they have been resting on the shelves of a dry cupboard or warehoused with a competent and trustworthy gunmaker—for my part I prefer to shift the responsibility for their condition to another, now that it can be so readily done at a small cost - and leaving the counting-house, the Courts, or the House of Commons, you find yourself, after a night in the train—which every year approximates more nearly to the comforts of an hotel—either on board a West Coast steamer enjoying the sea breezes and the fairyland panorama of the Hebrides, or delivered at your destination even in Inverness or Sutherland at a time which would have seemed fabulous to our not very remote progenitors. I remember the late Laird of Poltalloch, who died in 1893, telling me how his father used to

ride the whole way from London, purchasing his horse and having his saddle made before starting; and how, having been asked to patronise a young man just starting in business, he gave the first order to the founder of a famous firm still in the front rank of London saddlers and harness-makers. The journey then took three weeks. Now you may go to the theatre in London one evening, and arrive at Poltalloch in time for luncheon on the next day!

Happy is the man who is not obliged to defer his holiday till the last moment before the Twelfth, but can devote a few days to the burn and loch trout, to potting those troublesome rabbits with a pea rifle, and trying the young pointers and setters over a few of the neighbouring moors. He is not so likely as some to find upon the day his native heath very different from his native flagstones, and to collapse utterly at noon like Mr. Briggs. However, for many it is good fortune enough to be able to begin a holiday on the eve of the happy day, and members of Parliament have long been only able to obtain even that privilege either by neglect of their duties or the useful institution of a 'pair.' Still, the flesh is weak, and these are the confessions of one who generally contrived to have his feet upon the heather when the blissful Twelfth came round.

Those happy Twelfths! My memory carries me back over thirty years, every autumn of which has been spent in the North. There are few parts of Scotland from Sutherland to the Border which have not echoed to the report of my gun. What varieties of scene, what differences of climate, flit across the mind's eye at the thought of the first day of the season: tropical heat, arctic cold, light breezes, and shifting clouds; thunder and lightning and torrents of rain; the round rolling hills of Ross-shire; the Perthshire tablelands, so easy to walk after the hard climb to get to them; the broken mountains of Argyll, with their succession of small hills and valleys and constantly recurring visions of blue sea and distant islands; the down-like Border country, intersected by Esk, Teviot, and Dryfe, and rich with a thousand memories of Christopher North and Sir Walter. Each of these spots has a charm of its own; for Caledonia, like another Queen,

> Governs men by change, and so she sways all moods.

As the blissful date draws round I feel at peace with all mankind, and disinclined to take a controversial line. Let others exalt the varied charms of driving, shooting over dogs, walking in line, or stalking the old cocks round the hillocks—each method

WHEN THE BLISSFUL TWELFTH CAME ROUND

has its uses, each its delights; but let us at least tolerate the idiosyncrasies of others. When I hear a man say that he sees no sport in driving I find out, in nine cases out of ten, that he is either an indifferent shot or has had little or no experience of what he is denouncing. But I plead for a reciprocal toleration from the driving expert who 'fails to see any fun in knocking down slow-flying birds getting up under your feet.' A good shot finds plenty of scope for his powers in selecting the right birds and bringing them down neatly and well, and if the survival of the fittest is to extinguish every breed of sporting dog except the retriever, I hope it will not be in my day. It is delightful to see a pair of well-trained setters or pointers quartering the ground; and if you know and love your dogs, how often their faults and peculiarities rather endear them to you than otherwise!

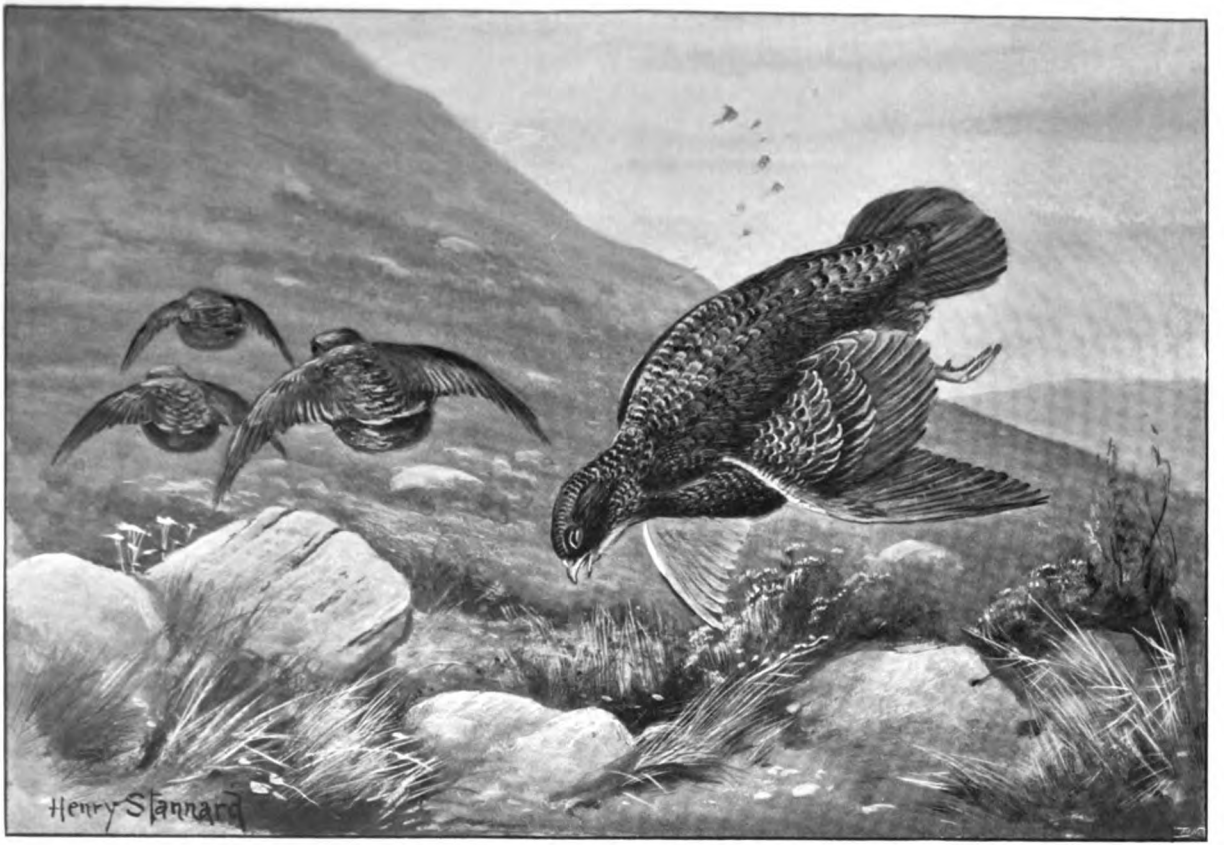
'He is all fault who has no fault at all,' and when Tim or Shuna chases that rabbit which jumps up under his nose, comes back sheepishly for the licking he knows he deserves, exhibits boundless and exuberant joy when he finds how easily he has got off, and repeats the same performance almost before the whip has been pocketed, it is impossible not to laugh, especially if you are not personally responsible for the training of the delinquent. Of one thing I am perfectly convinced—it is not the number of birds killed which constitutes the charm of shooting. My bag has varied from 100 brace and over to my gun, killed more than once in Forfarshire in the record year 1875, to a few brace shared with a couple of schoolboys; yet it is hard to say which days I have enjoyed most. Of course there are some days and years especially noteworthy. In 1875 the late Lord Cairns, his brother-in-law, Mr. McNeil, dear Edward Ross, the first Queen's Prize-man—now also, alas! no more—and myself got over 1,500 brace over dogs in the first ten days; and on August 25, the second time over the ground, I got by myself 75½ brace of grouse and a few snipe and hares; and, for contrast, I remember, the year when Lord Lauderdale was killed by lightning on the moor, that one of our dogs, a pointer, actually died on the hill then and there from the effect of cold and exposure.

One thing to note during the period is the steady and persistent rise of rents, and also, it is only fair to add, the great increase in the comfort of the average shooting-lodge. In the sixties and later a sporting tenant was prepared to rough it, but now, in many instances, he and his servants expect to find all the comforts of a southern country house in the heart of the forest or the glen. But let me revisit for a few minutes the country I

know and love best—dear Argyllshire, where forty brace over dogs is, and always has been, a great day; but which, in spite of all drawbacks of climate, is, in my judgment, the sportsman's paradise.

Our dogcart has just driven through the little village of Kilmartin, and we have passed first the old manse and the kirk, and the ancient granite monuments and crosses which represent an earlier form of Christianity, and shortly afterwards the staring free church, with 'desirable villa residence' adjoining, a little farther on just below the ruins of the old castle of Kilmartin. Another old ruin, that of Carnasary Castle, crowns the hill on the left, for we are at a place where three passes converge; and the Highland chiefs of former days had reasons, not always disinterested, for keeping the highways under their immediate observation. A fair-sized burn—the Scoinish—runs in a straight artificial course close by the side of the road. As a fisherman I regret that it was not allowed to have its own wilful way; but it is easy to see that if the road was to possess anything but an intermittent existence, the diversion of the stream was a necessity. The old river-course twisting and turning along the valley to the left, with all the varieties of pool and shallow, narrow, and rapid, was doubtless much more to the taste of trout and salmon, but floods must have of necessity been frequent and destructive. Now the fishing is not of much account, and an occasional sea-trout after a spate is all it affords to the legitimate angler, although hundreds of salmon run up in the autumn to spawn, and doubtless pay toll to the poacher when out of condition. In the corner under the plantation a deep hole, now dry, still bears the title of the Pool of the Coat of Mail. Tradition relates that a Maccallum, after a gallant defence of the old castle of Kilmartin against a band of his hereditary foes, was obliged to sally forth when they had set fire to his stronghold and made it literally 'too hot to hold him.' He succeeded in cutting his way through his tormentors, but had to jump into the pool to cool his armour, which was too warm to be comfortable. Lucky for him that the engineers had not then had their wicked will with the stream, for now the water is hardly knee-deep, and the poor man would have been roasted like a lobster in its shell.

Nothing, it seems, daunts the true disciple of Izaak Walton, for there, in front of us, is one in a deplorable plight. He stands in the road with a rod of portentous length leaning against the dyke beside him. His eyes are turned upwards as if appealing to heaven; but as we draw nearer we ascertain that he is otherwise



BRING THEM DOWN NEATLY AND WELL

occupied, and that the words proceeding out of his mouth are not supplications. His hook is attached to the telegraph wire over his head, half way between the two posts, and in spite of violent jerks the stout gut declines to give way. His position tells its own story. Evidently he has had a bite, and, striking 'not wisely but too well,' has caught—not the fish, but the telegraph wire. There is nothing for it but a break, for even if he could swarm up one of the posts the hook would still be out of his reach. We cannot wait to see the finale, but until we turn the corner the connection is still complete.

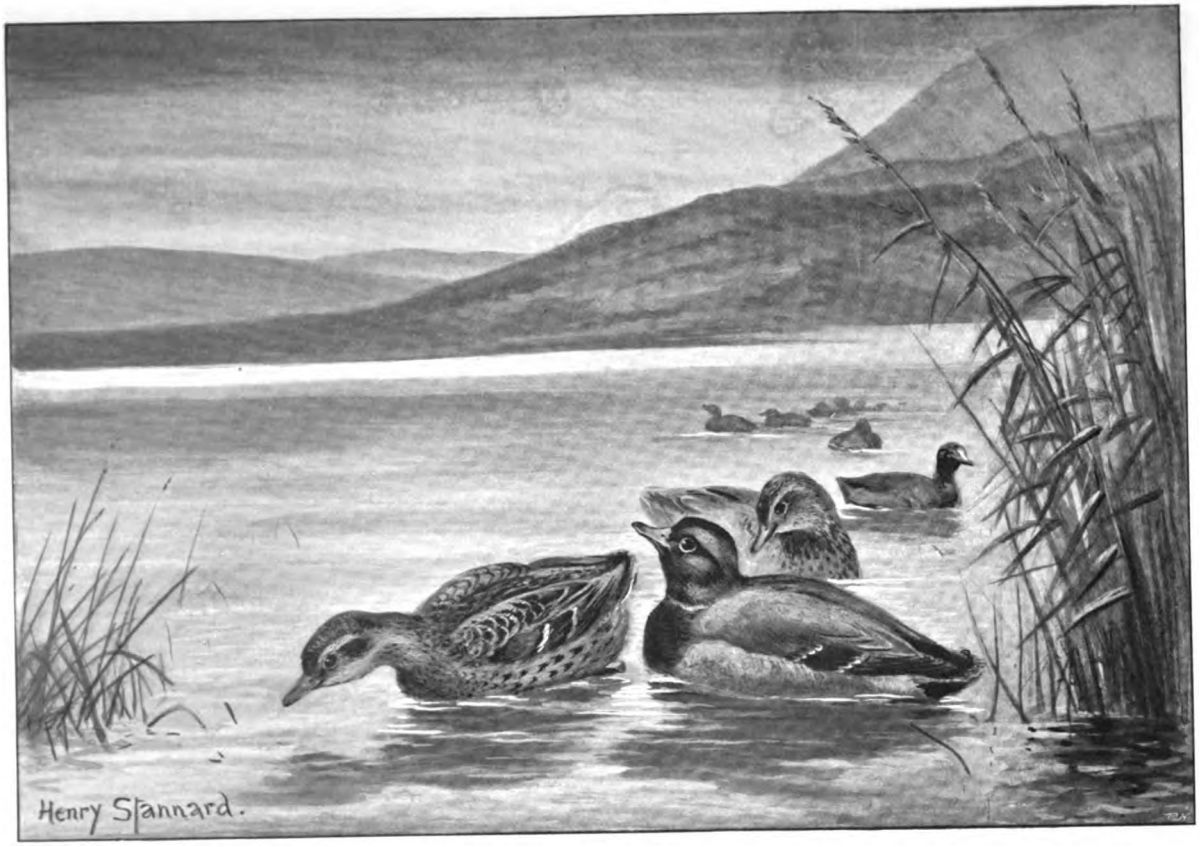
When we turn again to the right, it is easy enough to see that we are skirting the course of what was once a far mightier stream, but one that has been diverted in prehistoric times and by no human hand. We are now within three miles of Loch Awe on a nearly level road, and the traces of a large river are clearly visible immediately below us. Under the precipitous wooded hill to our left great water-worn boulders show where a grand pool must formerly have been, but pheasants and rabbits are feeding where salmon and trout once lurked. Doubtless this was once the course of the river Awe, and there would be no great engineering difficulty in letting the lake run this way again. A little bit farther on, where we turn off the main road, the two lakes where the wild ducks and coot are feeding, as well as the burn we pass on our way up the brae, discharge their waters into Loch Awe.

The road here degenerates into a mere farm track, very steep in places; but we have not much farther to go, for here is Stroneska farm, where dogs and keepers are waiting for us. Altogether there are eight dogs—six pointers and two setters; but two of the pointers are only young ones in their first season, brought out more for the benefit of their education than to help the sport. In addition to the head keeper and the one to whose beat the ground belongs there are two gillies, one of whom bears on his back an enormous pannier, capable of holding some thirty brace of grouse, and no light weight, if, as occasionally happens, it is filled at the close of the day. It is the theory of the Laird that ponies cannot be taken over the ground, and there is no doubt that there are many excessively boggy hollows and awkward dykes; but I confess to being sceptical as to the alleged impossibility, having seen much of the instinctive capacity of a well-trained Highland pony for finding its way across difficult country. However, the gillies do not have a hard time of it. Their duty is to keep out of sight of us, but within sound of a

whistle, in case fresh dogs or cartridges are wanted, and most of their time is spent in lounging about until the end of the day's sport, when the hamper has to be taken down to the dogcart. Then it is a sight to see how a tall Highlander can step out, in spite of the weight on his shoulders; but your West Coast man is better at an energetic spurt than at prolonged exertion.

The first part of our beat is up a low hill mainly grass and rushes, with only a few patches of heather; still, it is worth while to hunt it, as it is on the way, and there is nothing so tiresome as a long walk to the ground. The principal inhabitants are the ubiquitous rabbits, which here and now are a nuisance and nothing but it. When you see the side of a hill literally alive with them in the late evenings, it is hard to believe that men still living remember the first artificial introduction of the rabbit into Argyllshire and the prophecies that they would never do in such a wet climate. 'Let Rake go!' and off gallops a strong well-proportioned setter, delighted to have the first turn—a distinction he owes rather to his defects than to his merits, as it is now impossible to spoil him. 'Is that a very young dog?' says my companion, rather new to the sport and misled by the frantic activity of the débutant. 'He is as old as a man,' is the reply of the keeper—a slight exaggeration, but bordering on the truth, for I can remember Rake almost as an institution. What a hot day that was at Achoisk, when, we having toiled all the morning and found no birds, Rake caught the sheep by the leg! He never was known to do such a thing before or since, and I firmly believe he thought that we ought to have some flesh meat to take home, and that, as it appeared to be hopeless to find grouse, mutton should serve our turn for the nonce. But see—to-day he has turned to stone about a hundred and fifty yards off, and my companion cocks his gun and quickens his pace. I warn him not to hurry, that it is always better to go slow up to a point—a counsel of perfection which he hears but does not obey; and while my judgment condemns, my heart rather approves, for is he not young—lucky fellow!—and this the first point of the season? I have a pretty good notion what Rake has found in that rushy bit, and if I am right there is no hurry.

We get close up to the dog before anything moves, and have to force him forward, so near is he to the game; then there is a whirr of wings, and, just as the warning ''ware hen' breaks from my lips, there is a report and a fall, and the laws of the country and of sport are outraged by the destruction of a well-grown young bird. Alas for the beginning of the season; yet let



WHERE THE WILD DUCKS AND COOT ARE FEEDING

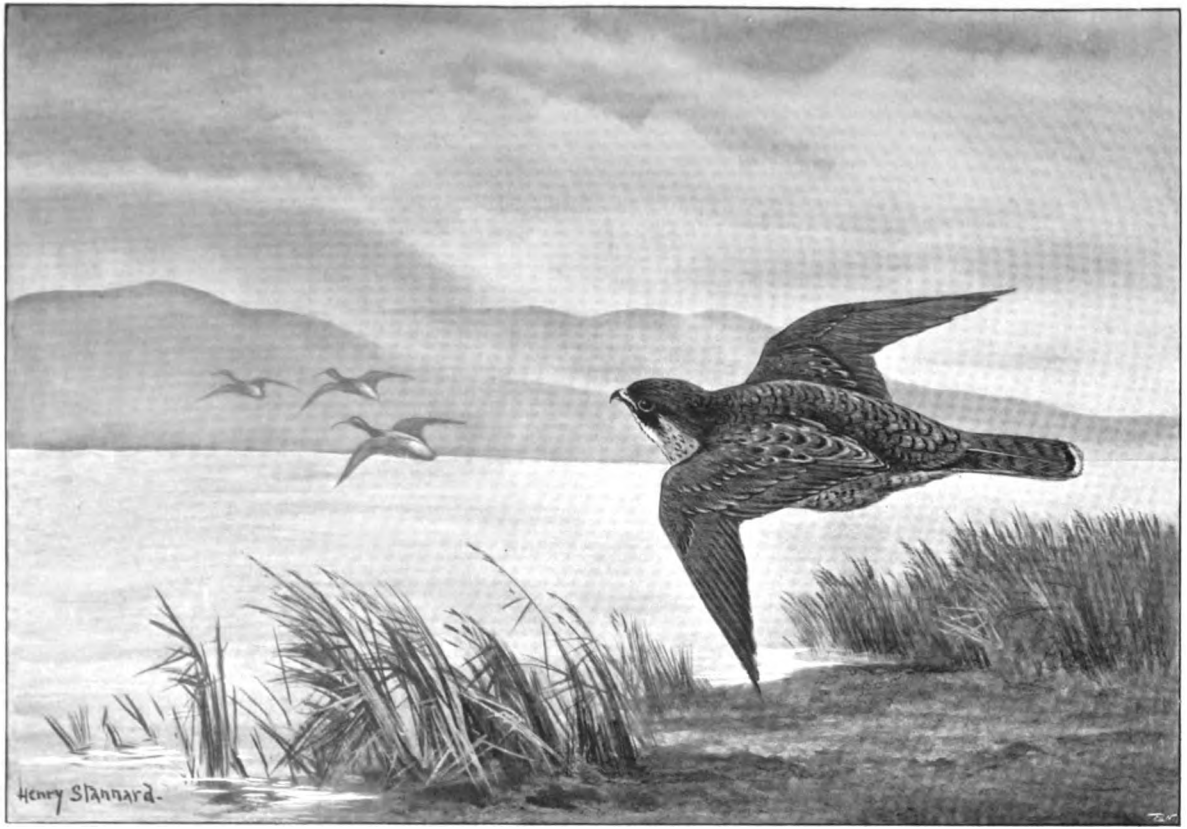
those who have never committed a similar mistake first cast a stone at my companion, who is profuse in his apologies, and sees the old hen and seven other young birds fly off almost in succession, presenting the most tantalising marks. Next, two or three snipe rise one after another, and a couple of them fall victims, while Rake - alas! that I should say it—more than once points at a rabbit, but in a constrained attitude, and with glaring eyes, which gives me a pretty good idea what he is after. We do not fire at the rabbits, not merely for fear of spoiling the dog, but also because if we killed all we saw the bag would be difficult to carry, and we are after nobler game. We are now coming to the heather, and we might safely hunt the younger dogs, but I cannot find it in my heart to take Rake up until he has had a chance, which comes quickly enough. A capital point, and a nice rise of a good covey of nine; this time there is no mistake made, and two brace are neatly killed—one by each gun—the young birds well grown and feathered. Then we whistle up the reserve dogs, and Rake is taken up for the present—a pair of white pointers, Juno and Diomede, quartering the ground in front of them with clockwork regularity.

So the morning goes on with varying fortune: the sun is rather hot, the scent not first rate, and sometimes we go half an hour without a shot; but when we reach the wire fence by the march of Craigan-terrive we find that another sportsman has been on the ground. We pick up two freshly killed grouse, and from the condition of their heads it is easy to see that the murder has been the work of a peregrine. Here the keeper casts a reproachful glance at me, as I never fire my gun at the magnificent birds, and rejoice at the Laird's orders that they should not be trapped. Inveterate poachers they are, no doubt - but what a beautiful thing is the swoop of a wild peregrine! Perhaps I shall see my friend himself later on. By one o'clock we stop at a lovely little spring coming straight out of the side of the hill, and stretch our limbs and inspect the bag while our luncheon is being unpacked. There are eleven brace of grouse—counting the grey hen, which must masquerade under that title, and an old black cock, whose illegal slaughter must, I fear, be attributed not to accident, but design—four snipe and a hare. Altogether a fair morning's work, for I usually calculate on the afternoon bag doubling that of the morning—the birds are easier to find, and the evening is the best time for shooting. There let them cool while we discuss our lunch and the best pipe of the day.

Half an hour, or perhaps three-quarters, sees us once more on

the move, and here we are on some of our best ground, just above Loch Leachan—a fair-sized loch, with a curious little stone island near its middle. It is very calm just now, and, although it is some distance off, we can see a flock of duck near the reeds, and the circles made by the rising trout. Here we pick up a good many birds, and spare one or two coveys of squeakers—second broods, to all appearance; and here we fall in with our poacher of the morning. As we round the corner of a knoll, three curlews come flying towards us, and, contrary to the custom of these shy birds, keep going round us in circles, close to the ground and almost within gunshot; and, sure enough, behind them is the falcon, who sheers off when he observes us—but does not go far off, if I know anything of his habits. When, later, the curlews fly off in the direction of Loch Crinan there is a rush of wings, and we see one of the finest bits of wild hawking it was ever my privilege to witness. I have seen the falcon after terns, ducks, and grouse, but I never saw anything to equal that rapid flight after the curlew—who, alas! succumbed at last, but at such a distance that I could just note the two join and fall together.

We now turn in the same direction as the falcon flew, for, like the curlew, our home is by the sea; and at half-past six Duncan and his ponies are despatched by a straight path to Roodel Glen, where the keeper's cart is waiting. He carries nearly thirty brace on his back; and we have added two or three more to the bag, as well as a couple and a half of ducks, by the time we reach the glen at seven o'clock. Happily, the dogcart has been sent for us—a concession to my age and infirmities, as it always used to be the custom to walk home from Roodel. But I am just as well pleased to be spared two miles along the road after a day which has been fairly hard although thoroughly enjoyable.



THAT RAPID FLIGHT AFTER THE CURLEW

THE POACHER

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON

I INVITED Mr. Williams, our Sassenach visitor, just arrived from the South, to come out for a stroll with me before twilight to inspect, as far as might be, the river and the moor. The property and the shooting were my brother's, by right of birth, but I was not exceeding the cadet's privileges in so far doing the honours. Besides, the young laird, my brother's eldest-born, accompanied us.

Mr. Williams was a quaint person, of staid middle age and confirmed bachelor habits. He was a very old friend of my brother, and had been a friend of my sister-in-law even before my brother married her.

The kingdom of Andrew McGillivray—head keeper, autocrat of the hill and gun-room, and instructor to the young laird in all things appertaining to the rod and the gun—consisted, for the most part, of very beautiful moorland, reaching from the highest arable and pasture farms away up to the hills which, like the hares, were blue in summer and snowy white in winter. The moor itself, between the farm lands and the unharvested hills, was a splendid stretch of imperial purple in July and August when the heather was a-bloom. Then the old cock grouse would be crowing and laughing, jumping up even on to the very grouse-

driving butts, and telling their wives and children of the things that had been—terrible things—around those butts—things that would never occur again. Only one or two of the older and more sapient birds would laugh at this tone of confidence, saying that every year these things had been said—that there would be no more men with spitfires, dealing death and wounds from those queer edifices of peat. But always, at a certain season of the year, after all had been lulled into a delusive sense of security, there had come a clamour on the hill, and a waving of flags and a shouting of men's voices. Then the grouse people had risen up, and only one here and there of the wisest had a thought, in their alarm, of how this harrying of the hill had happened before, and always had been followed by the spitting of fire and of death from the butts. One or two thought of all this, and went back over the heads of the men with flags, despite all their shouts. But the majority went on in a great pack, right away from the flags and the shouting, right over the line of the guns. And then, suddenly, from each of the butts, came the spitting of fire, as a man's head was seen above the level of the peat sods. Then came crashing death, a chasing of the wounded by dogs, terrible disaster among the grouse people.

It was nonsense, said the sapient ones of the grouse, to maintain that these things would not be again. They returned as surely as the bloom on the heather. There was no reckoning on the day, to a surety, as one could reckon on the hatching out of the eggs, but as sure as the change of colour in hares and ptarmigan these things would be; for man, though he was a creature entirely beyond calculation, obeying no comprehended law of instinct, but seeming to invent fashions for himself, might be depended on for this alone, that sooner or later—about the time of the last bloom of the heather—he would spit fire and death, with a thundering noise, from those big nests of peat sods, and would gather up the corpses of the grouse people (for Heaven knows what purpose, since he was not seen to eat them), and take them down from the hill on ponyback.

All this, however, was not a gun-room story. This was rather the sort of talk that the young laird had been accustomed to hear, years ago, from his nurses. He was long past that sort of thing. The point of view of the grouse had no attractions for him or McGillivray. From the window of the gun-room I pointed out to Williams the line of butts on the sky-line, and the sight suggested to the young laird visions of the dark birds, with outspread wings, coming like spots off the opposite hills—like spots

that scarcely seemed to be in movement, until suddenly they expanded into great grouse in front of you, and, before you had realised anything about them, were past you, with a 'whish,' and had again become black dots, lessening this time, in the distance behind you. Just occasionally the young laird would take himself sufficiently hard by the head, and his gun sufficiently resolutely in the strong grip of his left hand, to get it levelled at the right moment, and then with what a thundering bang the grouse, shot right in front, would come against the wall of the 'butt'! The young laird could feel the shiver of the 'butt,' even now, at the impact, and spoke eloquently of it to Mr. Williams.

From the line of butts seen out of the window, the hill went wandering down to the glen, all fringed with birches and alders, through which the river came at length to us, beside the house. The house was close beside the bridge, so that every morning, before breakfast, the right and proper thing, as I explained to Williams, was to go out and look down over the bridge to see whether the river promised to be in order for the running up or the capture of the salmon. The pool just above the bridge itself was not a bad one, but as a rule the autumn fish did not stay long in these lower pools. Rather they preferred to run up a mile or so further to the waterfall, or salmon-leap as we often call it. For there, of an evening, if there had been any spate at all to let the fish run over the lower places of the river, you might stand by the hour together and see fish after fish jump from the boiling, seething, foaming cauldron at the fall's foot, hang there, suspended a moment or two, even in the very midst of the descending water, then give up the struggle, and be carried at frantic speed back into the foam and bubble. It was marvellous to note the power with which the fish could launch themselves out of this raging torrent, and even in face of it, forcing themselves into the air by a stroke of their tails so powerful that the great fans would be still quivering even as they left the water and sprang up into the air. Four feet, five, and even six feet, as we estimated it, we would see them leap, even with such a 'take-off' as was given them by this mass of water hurrying with frenzied speed against them. It was not only the big fish that could do this. Big fish there were—whales, to us, of the salmon tribe—thirty-pounders, maybe, that would make the essay, and from these they went varying in size down to the little sea-trout of scarce a pound, all jumping, and jumping, and being carried down, and coming up again to the charge, and jumping again, and again giving it up. And then, when they had

got tired of all that treadmill kind of labour in vain, they would just let themselves be carried back and lie all day long, until the next evening, in the pool below the fall. It was a sort of allegory of many human lives; one could not but be sorry for them.

Now and then a fish got up. There was a sort of basin, worn away by the water, at one side of the fall, half way up. If a fish had the luck to lodge there, another rush and jump would send him up to the top; but I doubt if any ever jumped the fall clean at one effort, except in a very big spate. We often had thoughts of trying to shoot them, I told Williams, as they jumped, or catch

WE COULD STAND AND WATCH THEM

them in a net, for there was a ledge in the rock close down by the fall where we could stand and watch them so close that we could almost touch them as they jumped. But it was no good place to stand for long, for the rush and bubble of the water, and the noise of the cataract, dazed the eye and head; the ledge did not give a very secure foothold, and if one had happened to go giddy and make a slip into that boiling whirlpool it is doubtful whether one would ever have seen the light of this world's sun again. So we let the fish jump and jump and tire themselves

out in peace, and get swept back into the tranquil pool below. There they lay in battalions—a sore temptation! For any sort of a hook, well weighted and dragged along the bottom, would almost certainly clip into a fish, and then it was 'pull devil, pull baker,' between fish in the pool below and man on the rock above. I showed these fish to Williams, lying in the pool, but there were very few at the moment attempting the leap.

This was no river on which you could stand back and practise your beautiful throwing, with the line sent out straight behind you, as the phrase is, before being sent out straight in front of you over the water. The banks rose precipitously, like cliffs, crowned with oaks and firs and beeches above, casting wonderful and magic reflections into the still dark pools beneath. A bit of a flick, with a Spey cast, was the utmost you could manage, and generally the fish lay so sick and sorry and wearied by their vain jumping at the fall that they would not look at a fly. But the weighted fly would go down into the depths and have a look at them. Of course it was all very wrong legally, but morally it was perfectly blameless. These fish could not get up any further; not one in fifty of them would reach the spawning beds; they would just lie there and get sick and red; it hurt no proprietor higher up to pull them out as one could; so occasionally—only very occasionally—one or two were pulled out where the hook sank rather deeper than it was intended to and somehow or other got fast in a fish.

Then the 'pull devil, pull baker' business began, for it was not any use, for this kind of fishing, to be particularly delicate about your tackle; and it was wonderful how much more kindly a fish would come in if you just pointed the rod down at him and pulled him in steadily, hand over hand, by the line, than if you kept the butt to him, so that the quiver and play of the rod was always sending thrills into the wound of the hook. This was a discovery which might be of use in more recognised ways of fishing, too; but in this business, where the fish might be hooked by the fin, or the tail, or anywhere, it was almost essential *not* to give him the butt—if you had it would have taken the whole day to land him.

The final business was to get him nicely gaffed in the hole that the hook had made, so as to leave no tell-tale marks, and, that done, you had earned your dinner.

As I came to an end of expounding these mysteries, we reached the door of the lodge, whence Mr. Williams took a comprehensive view of moor and river.

'And it all goes to this boy, of course,' he said presently, laying a kindly hand on the lad's shoulder.

'Certainly,' I answered, 'some day.'

'Curious!' he commented, 'how things come about. I should not try fish-poaching,' he went on, turning to the young laird, 'if I were you. If I had kept off fish-poaching when I was only a little

SHE STOOD ON THE BRIDGE

over your age, things might have turned out quite differently for me—and for you.'

'For me!' the young laird echoed in astonishment.

'For him!' I said in the same tone.

'*Apropos* the fish-poaching I will tell you a story,' said Mr. Williams, quietly. 'She had the most beautiful and kindest eyes in the world——'

'What, the fish?' asked the young laird, with boyish impertinence.

'No,' said Williams, 'a young lady.' (He was at the time of life at which a man may praise, without indiscretion, the eyes of ladies whom he has known in his youth.) 'I met her at the Brampton Brian Ball. She was an orphan, rich. By an astounding oversight I omitted to ask her guardian's name. All the subsequent disaster was due to that—that and the fish-shooting.'

'It's a queer combination.'

'I'll tell you,' he said, 'then you'll see.

'Two days after the ball I started on a walking tour with a friend, over the great Cumberland hills. Maps were not so good in those days; one great hill looked singularly like another; in a word, at evening of the second day we were lost.'

'What fun!' the young laird observed.

'Wasn't it?' answered Mr. Williams. 'Providence, however, was kind to us—up to a point. Just as it grew dark we saw lights in the valley beneath, and, making our way towards them, found that they marked the windows of a big house. Necessity knows no law. We rang boldly at the bell, explained that we were benighted pedestrians, and I sent in my card. Luckily it bore my home address, and, more luckily still, the owner of the house had a slight acquaintance with my father. When he mentioned his name I remembered that I had often heard my father speak of "Old B." One of our keepers, I recollected, had gone to him. It was "Old B.'s" house that we had lighted on, and we found him the most hospitable of hosts. But what seemed to touch the whole chain of fortunate circumstance with the wand of a fairy was, that at dinner appeared my young lady of the beautiful eyes—the lady of the Brampton Brian Ball.

'By a truly astonishing coincidence we had stumbled on the very house in which she was staying. Then I blessed my stars. Now——well!

'She was charming to me, and "Old B." most friendly. The next morning he would not hear of our going. We must give them just another night. He regretted that he had to leave us during the day—magisterial business—but Mrs. B. would look after us. There was the river, a noted trout-stream, and tackle of all sorts in the gun-room. At present it was bright, but he fancied it would cloud over later, and so on, all most kindly.

'We went down to the river. There were fly on the water, and the fish rose to them freely. I prided myself on my art with

the dry-fly. I constantly passed the little thing of feather over the very nose of a rising trout, but he paid it not the least attention, snapping at a living insect by the very side of my vain imitation. Miss So-and-so, of the beautiful eyes, stood on the bridge a little below, and watched, and laughed sunnily when the big fish declined to be deluded.

'"Oh!" she said presently, "I am tired of you. You will never catch one!" She tripped back to the house.

'Then,' said Williams—that respectable Sassenach—quite fiercely, 'the devil took me. The sun shone as brightly, and

HAD HIM OUT WITH THE LANDING NET

the fish rose as freely—but never at my fly—as ever. I said to my friend, "I am going to get some of these fish." I said it with the resolution of a Napoleon.

'"How?" he asked.

'"I am going to get Old B.'s gun and shoot them!"

'We found the gun and some cartridges with it, and then we stole back again, hiding it as best we could, to the river. The big trout rose, slowly and fearlessly, through the crystal-clear water, and just as the dark head broke the still surface I fired.

The shot raked the water into foam a moment, then the splash expanded into widening circles, and in the centre of them lay the big trout, belly uppermost.

'In two minutes we had him out with the landing net. In five minutes more we had another. By the end of half an hour we had a handsome basket full.

'We reached the gun-room undetected, cleaned the gun and put it in its place, and sent the fish to the kitchen.

'"Bless me," said Old B., when they appeared on the dinner-table, "what a beautiful dish of fish! How did you manage to catch them? It did not cloud over as I hoped it would.

THE MURDER WAS OUT

'"Oh," we told him, jocularly, "there are more ways than one of catching fish."

'"Bless me," he said again, as he began to carve them, "how you have bashed them about the head—never saw such a way of killing a fish!"

'We began to feel just a little uneasy.

'As he commenced eating he repeated his favourite exclamation. He mumbled something hard in his teeth, then let it fall with a rattle into his plate.

'It was a No. 5 shot. The murder was out.

'"Bless me," he said, "do you mean to tell me you've been shooting my fish!"

'It was no use denying it. We apologised, expressing all the regret we really felt. It seemed no good to tell him how fair means had failed, or how I might perhaps have borne the failure but for the mocking looks and words of Miss So-and-so of the beautiful eyes. That argument would have carried no weight with Old B., and, besides, there were the beautiful eyes, looking reproach with every glance, regarding us across the table. It was plain that he was gravely vexed.

'"I am chairman of the fishing association of the river," he said. "Bless me, supposing you had been seen!"

'"Oh," I said, thinking it best to make a clean breast of it, "we *were* seen!"

'For as we were pursuing our sport a man had appeared, emerging from some bushes on the farther side of the river. We recognised him as a keeper by his garb. By a stroke of luck I further recognised him as that keeper who had formerly been with us, and had left us to better himself in the service of Old B. He hailed us and asked what we were doing.

'"What!" I said. "George, don't you know me?"

'"What! Master Frank," said he. "Be it Master Frank sure enough?"

'I assured him that it was, chucked a half-crown to him across the river, and told him we were trying experiments with the angles of incidence and reflection of the shot on water.

'"You had better look out," I added. "It is wonderful how they spread."

'He took the hint and the half-crown, and moved up the river's bank.

'I explained to Old B. that I thought we need not fear this man's telling, but the explanation failed to soothe him. We were disgraced, irrevocably disgraced. Previously his manner had been all kindness; now it was changed entirely, and with his change of manner that of the lady of the beautiful eyes changed too.

'We left early on the morrow, with most of the sensations of whipped schoolboys.

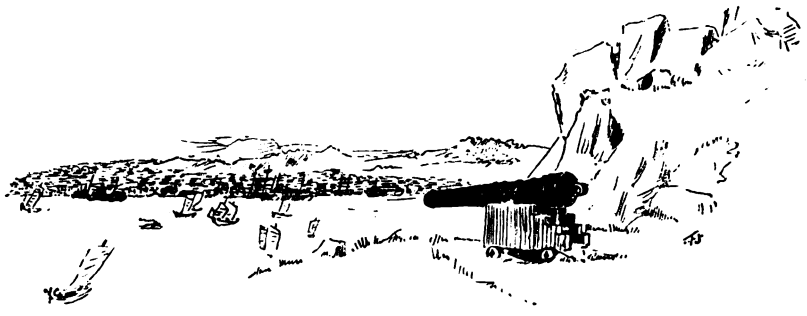
'Two days later the cup of my rage and humiliation was filled by learning that Old B. was her guardian. How should I have guessed it? She had not the same name. Naturally I never suspected any relation of this kind between them. I regarded her merely as a chance guest in the house. Had I known, of

course, I should never have poached Old B.'s fish, or done a thing to risk losing his regard. Had I not poached his fish, things might have been very different, both for you and me,' he added to the young laird.

'He never asked me back,' he concluded. 'I did not see her again till three years later. We made great friends, and had great chaff about the fish-poaching. But by that time she was married.'

'Who was she?' the young laird asked, with youthful indiscretion.

'Your mother. There she is at the tea-table. Shall we go in? She still has beautiful eyes.'



A FOURSOME AT AMOY

BY SURGEON T. T. JEANS, R.N.

EVERY year a large number of sportsmen come down to Hong Kong for the race week from Shanghai, Amoy, Foochow and Tientsin. Of these there are no better all-round good fellows than Rusby and Calderson, of Amoy. This year whilst they were down we—Reggy Pinhorn and myself—had played a foursome with them on the Happy Valley links, and won handsomely by three up. Afterwards in the Club we began to chaff them about the result, till Calderson, who till now had been quietly puffing away at a pipe, rather sore at his defeat and the loss of two balls in the race-course ditch, broke out impetuously with, 'You fellows have beaten us on your own links. I bet two hundred dollars you won't on ours.' 'I'm there!' sang out little Rusby from the depths of a long whiskey-and-soda. 'Didn't know you had any links,' we jeered. 'Where d'you play? On the tennis court?' 'Come and see,' answered Rusby, looking at us through his absurdly large eyeglass. 'We'll make you corpses by the time you've played eighteen holes.' We didn't fully appreciate this remark then—we do now. 'We'll teach 'em to play golf. Eh! Calders?'

Now whilst the racing fever is at its height, Reggy never can resist any opportunity of making a bet, and he promptly closed with them without troubling to consult me (he never did). And it was arranged that we should play them in a fortnight, on our way to the Foochow races.

The news of the match quickly spread through the Club, and the fact that any strangers should be confident of beating the Amoy fellows on their own links seemed to afford considerable amusement. Men uttered mysterious hints about

the difficulties of the links, and in answer to our requests for information, they would say 'Bunkers? oh, the usual kind of bunkers. Greens? Greens? did you say? Oh! the usual kind of greens,' and nothing more could we extract. Even when we took a quiet opportunity and asked A. Kan, the head-boy and steward at the Golf Club, the wily old man only grinned, showing two rows of splendid teeth, and said, 'Amoy links belong all same, vely good,' which was not exactly what we wanted.

'They can't be much worse than the Malta links or the moats at Haslar,' I told Reggy reassuringly, when we had been

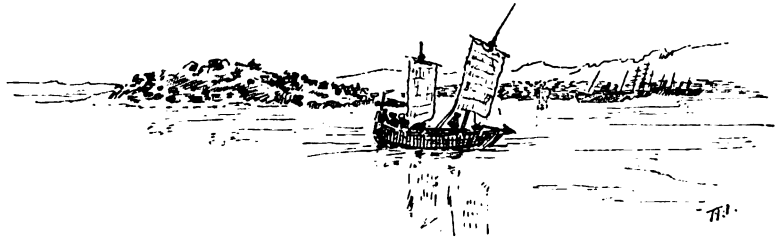
THEY HAD LOST BALLS IN THE DITCH

discussing the state of affairs one day. 'I remember once——' 'Dry up!' he interrupted rudely. 'If I've heard your darned golf yarns once I have a hundred times, and don't want to again,' which explosion of temper all goes to prove that he *had* backed Red Star for the Hong Kong Derby after all.

After the race week we took one of Jardine's steamers for Amoy, both of us anathematising our luck and the *pari-mutuel*, and the second evening out anchored up the harbour. Hardly had the Customs people boarded us before Rusby bounced on board and

took us to Kulung-su Island—the foreign settlement. We were sculled across in a sampan by a hideous one-eyed Chinaman, a grim Charon indeed, who Reggy said 'quite put him off his feed.'

We dined with Calderson, and by the time we turned in for the night, were quite ready to back ourselves to any amount for



AMOY AND KULUNG-SU FROM THE SEA

the morrow. In fact, it was with some considerable difficulty that I prevented Reggy laying long odds.

Next morning we walked out to the links, passing through the small Chinese village, in which we saw a man in stocks outside his own shop—a punishment, probably, for having given short weight. As we were climbing a steep incline covered with stubbly grass and strewn with boulders, I saw Calderson throw down his bag of clubs and take a look round. 'What's the matter—done up already?' I asked him jokingly. 'No,' he answered, diffidently, 'only we've got there.' 'Got there!' I exclaimed; 'got where?' But it was unnecessary to ask, for he was already kneeling down and scraping a little dry sand into a heap and trying to make a tee. I looked round, and dotted in among huge boulders—planked down among innumerable concrete native graves—were several familiar red flags hanging limply in the morning calm. There was not a space of clear turf within sight, and what the greens were like we could conjecture only too well.

I caught Reggy's eye; we both looked sadly at each other, and then at our numerous drivers and brasseys, both recognising simultaneously that they were practically useless here.

The first green was on the near side of a wall which apparently separated two large graveyards, and was the only spot not covered with graves or stones. 'Never saw anything like this before,' whispered Reggy, and I noticed that the other two were smiling at our astonishment.

There is a little hotel close by much favoured by American missionaries, and sending our coats, &c. in there, we began playing.

Calderson drove off with an iron; the hole was not more than eighty yards away, and his ball dropped dead about two yards the other side of the flag. 'That's just the place,' said Rusby, screwing his face into a comical expression of half apology, half satisfaction. 'Don't you fellows get away to the right, or you'll lose your ball.' I followed, and, using my driving cleek, of course managed to cut the ball, and away down the hill it went. Reggy gave me a look of inexpressible scorn, and trudged after it, his long legs being very useful in negotiating graves and tombs. He called me plaintively a minute later, so down I scrambled after him, to find that he had discovered the ball nestling up to an inscription stone, and had lofted it into a dead bush about two yards away—the only vegetation, dead or alive, for thirty yards. I hit blindly at it with a very heavy iron, and away it went, falling not two feet from the hole in a tuft of thick grass. 'I once got out of Haslar Moat in half an hour with that club,' I remarked, when I had seen the ball dead. Reggy was dumbfounded; so was I, but climbed up with a reproachful look at him. Rusby followed, but did not hole out, and we finally halved that hole in four. A putter was quite useless on that, or, as it turned out, on any of the greens; so we followed our opponents'

NOTHING BUT GRAVESTONES

example and used either an iron or niblick, the latter being probably the more effective.

From the next tee we could see the flag on the shoulder of a hill about one hundred and twenty yards away, and Rusby, with a cleek, landed on the near side of the slope, clear of all obstacles.

'Just in the right space,' he said, waiting for it to stop rolling, and with that same half-pitying air which he had shown before. 'Don't go past it, whatever you do.' Now Reggy imagines that if he is good at anything it is at judging a drive, and nothing will prevent him from using a driver. I knew perfectly well that the distance was not long enough, and, though I advised him in the most diplomatic manner, his favourite driver circled round his head, and away spun the ball over the hill, out of sight. 'You

MAKING TIMID LITTLE SHOTS

won't find that ball again,' the others said sympathetically; and we didn't, though Reggie insisted on us all spending a futile ten minutes searching for it.

The third green is on the edge of a cliff, the further edge overhanging the sea. Fortunately for us, Calderson did not loft his stroke sufficiently, and the ball had so much pace on after touching the ground that it rolled over the cliff, despite the ridiculous contortions of little Rusby, who was following its flight with his eyeglass tucked into his eye and his whole body

bent back, as if he could thus arrest its course. Luckily we holed out in nine, making timid little approach shots, and finally taking five on the green, so unaccustomed were we to their peculiarities. Score: one all.

The fourth is the long hole—right out of sight over a sloping shoulder of rock, the hole itself being on the top of a mound surrounded by nearly vertical sand-bunkers. Our directing mark was a large boulder, and Reggy drove so carefully that he struck it, the ball rebounding and rolling downhill into a mass of loose

A WAITER BROUGHT US DRINKS

rocks. Needless to say, we lost that, as well as the next—a short hole, situated on a very sloping green, only to be approached by dropping the ball on a small plateau immediately above it—a feat I did not accomplish, but sent it bounding downhill to the right. 'I do wish you wouldn't use that idiotic iron,' Reggy muttered. 'If you'd only stick to your driver, we might have a chance.' We did that hole in sixteen. Score: two down.

The sixth is the short hole, and Rusby implored us tragically not to go to the right, or we should lose our ball in a cow-yard about three hundred feet below. 'Follow me,' he said kindly,

and sent his ball spinning down, right out of sight. 'Just as I told you,' he said, not the least perturbed. 'We'll give you that hole, if you don't get in the same place.' Reggy didn't, and the score was one down.

As we climbed up the rocks to the next tee, they tried to cheer us. 'First few holes a bit tricky, if you're not accustomed to them; but you'll make up for it at the next two—ripping good holes—more your style. Eh! Calders?' 'Rather,' Calderson agreed, 'awful sporting holes.' They were. The tee was on the

HIT AN INOFFENSIVE COOLIE

turf-covered top of a big rock; the green on the side of a hill, the slope of which was covered with mandarins' graves. Between the two were three paddy fields, a ditch, a road—along which numerous coolies were tramping—another ditch, and a sandpit scooped out from the hill.

'Drive right past the hole, and keep to the left,' was the advice Calderson gave us, as his ball, hitting the side of the hill, trickled gently down on to the green. I followed, and, though going again to the right, saw to my great relief that I had gone past the sand. 'A little dangerous,' Rusby muttered; and, even

as he spoke, the ball came rolling down nearer and nearer to the danger. A grave arrested its course for a moment, but it ran down the side, and, gaining impetus, rolled over the edge.

Reggy, consigning golf, and my golf in particular, to other climes, trudged after it. 'You'd better go too, old chap,' Rusby said; 'it's rather an awkward bit.'

When I reached the ball, Reggy had just driven it further into the sand. He turned red in the face with fury in his eyes, his remarks not being fit for print. 'What price the moat at Haslar?' he said sarcastically, when we had played ten and given

THE BALL WAS FOUND IN A BROKEN GRAVE

up the hole. I was too much annoyed to answer. By good fortune we won the ninth, and the score for the first round was two down.

A waiter from the hotel now brought us drinks, and also found three boys to carry our bags, so we started the second round in better spirits. We lost the first, but won the next two. At the fourth I made a very lucky drive, laying my ball dead close to the green, and, Reggy clearing a patch of sand, we won that hole, standing six all. Reggy lost the next by his persistence in using a driver and through excitement, and I lost the cow-yard one by again badly cutting my ball for the fourth time

that morning. Score: two down and three to play. Rusby, leading off across the valley, drove into the road, and hit one of two inoffensive coolies carrying a pig. A good drive of Reggy's won us that hole.

The match was now very exciting. Coming back over the road I got in a fair drive, and, Reggy following by a lucky niblick shot from the corner of a grave, we won that hole. Score: eight all and one to play.

The last hole is a short cleek or iron shot downhill, but a good lie off the green is impossible. My shot landed on a big boulder, and disappeared among some graves. As luck would have it, Calderson topped his ball, and it went among a large heap of stones, my caddy, a fat boy, who took great interest in the game, giving a grunt of satisfaction. After a long search our ball was found in an open grave among crumbling bones. We shouted for instructions, and removed it, counting one, and played our third on to the green. 'Not so bad,' said Reggy; 'they're up in the rocks.' Even as he spoke there came a shout of 'Fore!' and we saw Rusby's fat little figure climb rapidly to the top of a rock, screwing his glass into his eye as he followed with swaying figure the flight of his ball. Plump! it came, not two feet from the hole. Calderson, never so cool as when everything depends upon his stroke, holed out with his next, and won the match.

We had a rattling good time at the Foochow races, where we made up for our previous ill-fortune. Afterwards, at Hong Kong, if any of the fellows chaffed us at the result of our Amoy game, Reggy would burst out with, 'If those infernal Chinese would mend their ancestors' graves, instead of fooling round joss-houses and worshipping them, we should have won.' And he still considers that he has a real grievance against the whole race.

THE LATTER-DAY WAGER

BY HAROLD MACFARLANE

As the result of an argument as to whether this end of the century could produce a record of foolish wagers equal to those perpetrated in that golden era of idiotic gambling which brought the eighteenth century to a close, the writer of this article collected as many instances as possible to support his theory that 1896 was in no way behind 1796 in that respect, and is of opinion that he has proved his case. As a preface it may be mentioned that the United States of America has not been drawn upon for any examples, and that, with one or two exceptions, those mentioned have all occurred during the last few months.

It was at Monte Carlo, the scene of many wild contests, that the first extraordinary wager noted came off. It was a race down a certain hill between two young men, and the only condition was that the winner was to put the loser's stake upon the red at the tables, and that the profits, if any, were to be divided between the contestants. The story of how the red turned up divers times in sequence, and of the sum—it varied with each account—secured for division, of the 'red' dinner the wagerers gave when once more on England's shore, when the waiters donned red shirt fronts and the decorations were red, much already has been written and much been read. Perhaps it does not equal some of the picked wagers of the last century—such, for instance, as that which resulted in a Mr. Courtney being sued for 100 guineas, the sum he had wagered that another gentleman could not produce three horses which should go ninety miles in three hours, a feat which the gentleman in question easily performed by starting all three horses at once, by which artifice thirty miles alone was the

distance they had to travel through in the time; but then such wagers as that are of the rarest occurrence.

'It is alleged that George Skelly, butcher, of Berwick, who died not long since, had just previously emptied a quart bottle of whisky in four gulps to decide a bet. After the performance he was taken suddenly ill. He was fifty years of age,' such was the announcement in the newspaper only a few months ago, though from its nature it would seem to have been an excerpt from a news-letter of a century back, when heavy drinking was in vogue, though at that time surprise would not have been expressed so much at the terms of the wager as the result of it.

Almost on a par with the tandem-driving feat of the gentleman who tooled his pair down the steps leading from Waterloo Place to St. James's Park was the remarkable cycling feat accomplished by a young Englishman, inappropriately named French, who, for a bet of 100*l.*, made the descent from Monaco proper to the Condamine on a unicycle early last year, the difference being that the latter feat was the more difficult as the path, unlike the steps, is not only very steep, but has three turnings and several flights of steps. The cyclist accomplished the feat, much to the surprise of the crowd who had assembled to see him fail, and to murmur over his shattered remains those pleasing words (for the sayer), 'I told you so!'

One hundred and eight years ago 20,000*l.* depended on the issue of a wager which a young Irish gentleman made to the effect that he would walk to Constantinople from London and back again within the year; a few months ago two Germans arrived at Toulon who have undertaken to walk round Europe, Asia Minor, Palestine, and Egypt for a wager of 2,000*l.* They had eighteen months allotted them to accomplish their task in, and what with brigands and soldiers who arrested them as spies, they were enjoying quite an eventful stroll; on an average, we learn, they cover twenty-five miles a day. For a similar amount, a certain Count has engaged to walk an American a distance of 4,000 kilomètres in a certain time. These feats of pedestrianism are very prevalent at present; but the contest in question has a few novelties in the way of conditions attached to it which lift it out of the ordinary run of similar wagers. To start with, both competitors enter on their promenade without a sou in their pockets—to keep them from going by train (?) They also carry their own knapsacks, and are not allowed to shave or enjoy a hair-cut. At the end of the journey they should be about qualified to spring at once into popularity as pianists of the first water. From Paris

the course embraces Switzerland, Savoy, the Riviera and Genoa, the winning-post being at Avignon. When last heard of, the Count, who was accomplishing six miles an hour in company with his cyclist trainer with the greatest ease, was winning easily, the American being laid up at Nice. Happy Count! Four thousand kilomètres, or 2,500 miles, is not a bad walk, but it is a mere bagatelle to that undertaken by Henri Gilbert, who delights when in Paris in the *nom de marche* of 'Le Globe-trotter;' he has undertaken to walk round the world in five years, and it is his intention to lecture thereon at the Paris Exhibition of 1900, if there is one.

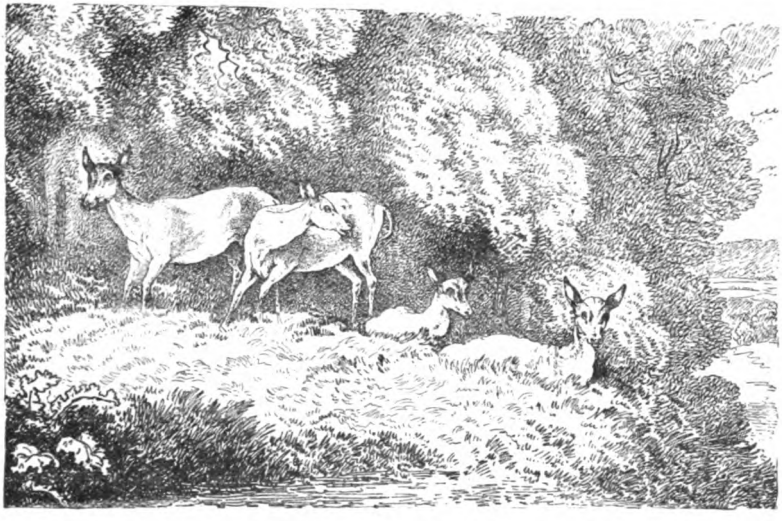
A journey round the world was undertaken at the end of last year by a M. Gallais, his wife and brother-in-law, under the auspices of the Bordeaux Geographical Society, though what benefit would possibly accrue to geography by the wheeling of a barrow throughout their journey, which was one of the conditions, has never transpired. Madame Gallais succumbed to injuries received from wolves which attacked the party, but M. Gallais is quite confident that he and his wheelbarrow will accomplish the journey of 33,000 kilomètres that lies before him before the time, two years, allowed him is up. To start on a stroll round the world seems to be quite the thing for the visitor at Paris to undertake at present, and will soon get as popular as cycling in the Bois; it is pretty easy to start on feats of that description, the only difficulty is in the finishing of them.

To add to our collection of latter-day wagers we have had our attention drawn to a billiard match which recently took place under novel circumstances. The game was 1,000 up, the amount staked we have been unable to discover, but one player donned a full suit of armour and ten pairs of Berlin-wool gloves, and the other wool boxing-gloves. If 'spot' had not allowed 'plain' 980, the compliment being returned, the probabilities are that the game would not have been finished during this century; as it was, the gentleman clad in the ironmongery ware came off second best.

The mention of iron awakens memories of M. Alexandre's feat, which he brought to a successful termination one day last spring. M. Alexandre is, or was on the day he became famous, but a humble shop-assistant in Paris; but he thought he was worthy of greater things, so wagered 500 francs that he would swallow a yard of galvanised iron stove-piping. The bet was accepted, and the immortal Alexandre repaired to a whitesmith, armed with the piping, which was one-sixteenth of an inch in thickness and five inches in diameter, with the request that he would reduce it to powder, which request was promptly carried

out. Then in the presence of witnesses and spectators galore M. Alexandre divided the filings into five portions, placed them in five blocks, which the intrepid swallower tossed off at intervals of ten minutes. History relates that he was none the worse the next morning for the stove-pipe he had swallowed, but we are greatly afraid that, if the iron did not enter his soul, it spread itself over the rest of his anatomy, to his eventual inconvenience.

It is really strange how frequently Big Ben enters into wagers—in fact, conversation can hardly turn on the big clock without a bet resulting. There are people who insist that when Big Ben strikes twelve at night the next day begins at the stroke one; others say the stroke seven notifies the birth of a new day, apparently imagining that the time between the sixth and seventh stroke is neither P.M. nor A.M.; while of course there is another person who insists that the clock finishes his day's work with the twelfth stroke. Another favourite subject for a wager is to bet that a man cannot eat a sponge cake and drink a glass of milk while the clock strikes twelve; and yet another, which was successfully accomplished by Lord Randolph Churchill when member for Woodstock, is to run the entire length of Westminster Bridge during the same time.



A SPORTING TRIP TO CAPE L'AGULHAS

BY HENDRIK B. KNOBLAUCH

In or about the year sixteen hundred and seventy-something, A.D., there resided in a rickety mudwalled fort on the shores of Table Bay a certain peppery old Dutch Governor who spent his days in dispensing keelhaulings and reduced rations to fractious servants of the Netherlands East India Company, and his nights in consuming the said Company's gin. Among the members of this gentleman's suite was a certain doctor of divinity—the Rev. Dr. Paul Boerverneuker van Donderpadda—His Excellency's domestic chaplain, a man so thoroughly imbued with the rigid ascetic principles of Dutch theologians of the old school that he actually had the temerity on one occasion to threaten to report His Excellency to the Company for extracting more than His Excellency's due share of stone-bottled Schiedam from the castle commissariat stores. This so perturbed His Excellency that when the next squadron, homeward bound for Holland from the East Indies, became due in Table Bay, he packed off the doctor of divinity in company with a schoolmaster, a carpenter, a corporal of marines and a couple of pack-oxen, on an exploring expedition to the interior, shrewdly surmising that if the Hottentots and Bushmen by some stroke of ill-luck allowed His Reverence to

return, the latter would at all events miss the squadron and the chance of forwarding his indictment to headquarters. Well, the exploring expedition started, crossed the chain of rugged mountains that point their purple peaks skyward in the setting sun about thirty miles to the north-east of the Cape peninsula, and, on the fifth day out, sighted a river flowing eastwards. The expedition followed the course of this river for three days, and then one of their pack-oxen was stolen by a lion. A night or two later a party of wandering Bushmen walked off with the other bullock. In the course of the following day the party came to the *kraal* or village of a Hottentot chief with an unpronounceable name, whom the D.D. for convenience sake dubbed 'Appel,' but who gave His Reverence and the latter's companions to understand (by signs) that if they proceeded further along the river there would be trouble. The musty old chronicle before me goes on to state that, 'through stress of circumstances, an expedition which had promised much was thus compelled to return to Capetown, where all its members, excepting the two pack-oxen, arrived safely, but weary and footsore, after an absence of three weeks.' Unfortunately the chronicle tells us nothing about the meeting between Damon and Pythias—no, I mean between the governor and his chaplain—on the latter's return; nor does it inform us whether His Reverence's report anent the gin ever reached the hands of the Honourable East India Company; but it does say that the spot where the expedition turned back came thenceforth to be known as '*Appelskraal*,' and the river on which it was situated as the '*Rivier Zonder Einde*,' *i.e.* 'the river without end.'

Two centuries and more have passed and gone since the bibulous old Dutchman and his ascetic chaplain vanished from the scene. The haunts of prowling lions and wandering bushmen have given place to smiling vineyards and wavy cornfields. True, the River Zonder Einde—it has retained the name—flows on now as then, its dark, palmetto-tinted waters glinting in the morning sun as they thread their way through the broad strip of dark green that forms so effective a foreground in the setting of the many whitewalled, thatch-roofed homesteads dotted along its banks to-day. And Appelskraal? Yes, Appelskraal, too, is there still. Not the squalid assemblage of Hottentot hovels of two hundred and odd years ago, framed out of palmetto stumps, and plastered over with yellow potclay, but a typical Cape farm of the best class, whose whitewashed Dutch-gabled buildings peep out from under a mass of eucalypti, oak, and willows, and where green and scarlet sugar-birds and large *bokmakirie* thrushes and finches

and other birds innumerable flutter and hop about the livelong day amidst gay bougainvilles, pink and white Ceylon roses, and other flowers and shrubs in every shade of the rainbow.

It was in the month of June last that, in company with a party of friends, I set out from this same Appelskraal on a sporting trip to Cape l'Agulhas, distant thence about fifty miles due south as the crow flies.

The clock strikes 5 A.M. as the black servant brings in my coffee; and the hoarfrost on the grass crackles crisply under my tread as I run down to the River Zonder Einde, and take my header into its waters by the light of the stars and the waning moon in a perfectly cloudless sky. We are to start at 6 A.M., an

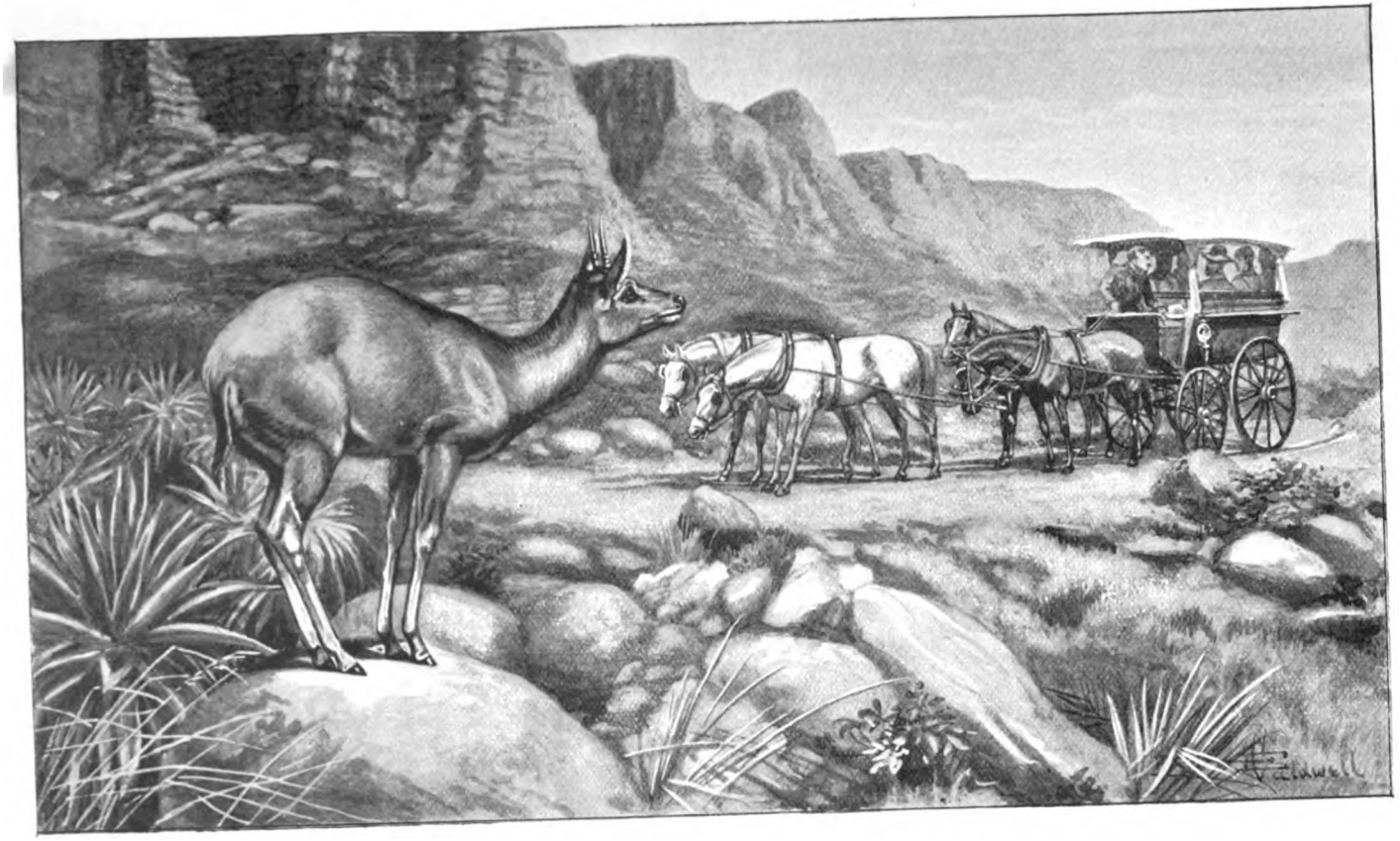
WEARY AND FOOTSORE

hour before sunrise. Remember, it is midwinter in the southern hemisphere, and the sun not due until seven o'clock. A comfortable wagonette, hooded, and with flaps buttoned down until the advent of Father Sol, holds six of us inside, and the two drivers on the box seats. Our team consists of four wiry little horses warranted to work and anxious to be off. Following us comes a Cape cart, containing saddles, hammocks, two pointers, stores, &c., drawn by two fat mules and a couple of ponies, with a Hottentot boy as driver. Our pipes are alight, wrappers, &c. adjusted, good-byes spoken, the man at the left leader's head steps aside, and we are off.

For the space of an hour we drive steadily onwards at a sharp trot. Then, on the crest of a high hill, our horses are wheeled

sharply to the left and brought to a standstill just as the rays of the rising sun stream into the wagonette. The air feels crisp, exhilarating, and deliciously pure. White, pink, purple, yellow and scarlet field lilies, Cape daisies and wild hyacinths peep out shyly from little grassy knolls in the openings between the solid blocks of dull grey rhinoceros-bush on either side of us. In the distance, away on the left, the snowy peaks of the beautiful Zonder Einde mountains are glittering in the sunlight; while down in the valley immediately below us a thin column of grey smoke is slowly rising upwards from the chimney of a farmhouse standing in a large square surrounded by tall aloes, and we can hear the 'Koel! Koel! Koel!' and 'Kip! Kip! Kip!' of the farmpeople summoning ostriches and poultry to a morning repast of barley and maize. Partridges are calling and *korhaan* scolding and screaming far and near as we drive away after allowing our team ten minutes' breathing space; and a shiny, sleek-looking steenbuck, with two sharp little black horns, stands calmly surveying us from a bit of rising ground not fifty yards off. But nobody even so much as thinks of unslinging a gun from the wagon-roof—our armoury *pro tem.*; no, there will be time enough for that sort of thing later on. Up and down, this way and that, in and out do we roll and wind among the grey hills; while every now and again square green patches of growing corn, and flocks and herds of sheep, goats, bullocks, and ostriches grazing and feeding quietly together, point to the close proximity of a farming homestead. We drive past several dams, too, those artificial storage receptacles of yellow water upon which South Africa is so largely dependent during its seasons of protracted drought. A thorny acacia, or may be a solitary weeping willow, as often as not overhangs the side or corner of the dam where the water is deepest, the projecting branches of the tree serving as convenient supports for chattering yellow finches or weavers to swing their nests from in the summer-time.

As the hands of our watches point to nine o'clock, we draw up for breakfast and outspan on the edge of a steep, shaly cliff that overlooks the bed of the Zout ('Salt') River—a name sufficiently expressive in itself. The beautiful open stretches of deep greenish-tinted water with which this stream abounds are salt as salt can be. No amount of rain-water in the wettest of wet seasons ever suffices to neutralise their briny taste. But though its waters are undrinkable, its banks are by no means deserted. Partridges, Cape pheasants, rock pigeons, bustards, grijsbuck, otters, rock rabbits, hares, and what not dwell here in profusion; and



CALMLY SURVEYING US

beautifully marked kingfishers, scarlet weavers, and other small birds innumerable swarm about the rocky projections and among the graceful wild bamboo that line its course.

The exquisitely pure and bracing atmosphere has made us all ravenously hungry. While our teams are being watered at a dam in the valley on our right, two of our drivers busy themselves with swinging a coffee-kettle from a tripod and preparing the coals for the gridiron. Our breakfast? Hot sausages and devilled partridge fresh from the gridiron; sweet potatoes and a sheep's head—brain and all—baked in a burning ant-heap hard by; snipe and freshwater turtle pie; strips of grilled venison; brown bread and butter and black coffee—why, the most fastidious epicure might envy us our breakfast on the cliff this glorious June morning in South Africa!

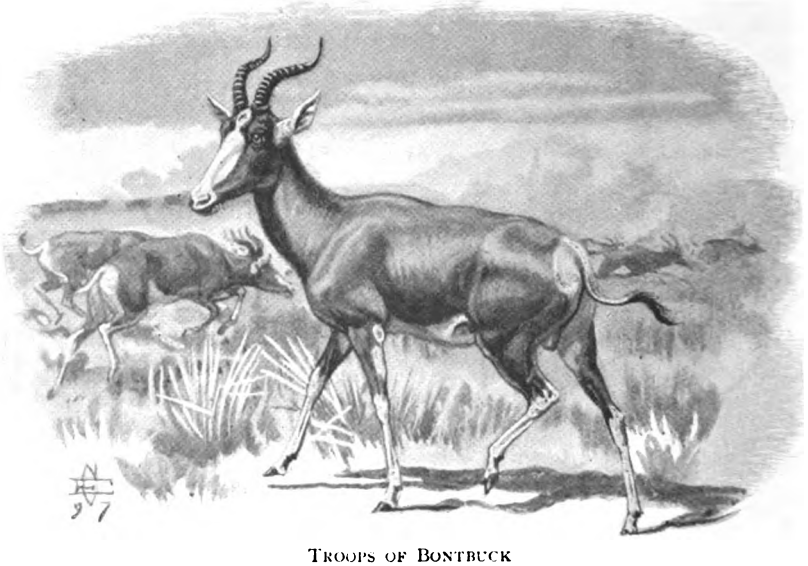
But away! As the steeple-clock of the thatch-roofed white-walled Dutch Reformed church strikes eleven, we drive into the neat little village of Bredasdorp. Here our horses have a feed, while we lay in a supplementary supply of powder, shot, and bottled beer at the village store, from the high entrance doorstep of which we catch a glimpse in the distance of the snowy-white sandhills and dunes that skirt the northern point of the dividing line between the Indian and South Atlantic oceans.

As we leave Bredasdorp behind us the scenery rapidly changes. The hitherto endless succession of dull grey hills is succeeded by level country; the rhinoceros bush makes way for the vivid green protea; and the dams with their muddy contents are replaced by streams of crystal-clear water sparkling under the rays of the noonday sun. We lunch on a rise overlooking the shores of a lake or *vlei*, the mirror-like surface of whose placid waters teems with myriads of wild duck, wild geese, muscovy, and other water-fowl. Then we drive for a mile or two along the barbed wire fencing of a huge camp or enclosure in which troops of bontbuck and wild ostriches are preserved by the enterprising owner of the land.

At length we reach the edge of the green belt through which for the past two or three hours we have been travelling; and a sea of white sand, unrelieved by so much as a scrubby bush even, now stretches between us and the snowy dunes that four miles further south hide the blue ocean from our view. Road there is none here; frequent south-easters and shifting sands can explain the reason why. Our cart and wagonette every now and again sink to their axles in the sand; but our teams are built of pretty stern stuff, and just as the sun's lower edge cuts the horizon in

the north-west, we enter a narrow opening or pass in the range of sandhills, and a few minutes later emerge into the open with the salt breath of the ocean full upon us.

Directly in front the crested waves of Struys (*i.e.* 'Ostrich') Bay sweep sharply inland between the dark rocks of the famous Cape on the one hand, and a barren, scraggy offshoot of the terrible Agulhas Bank on the other. The background of white sandhills tipped with purple and gold by the setting sun serves to emphasise the contrast in colours of a scene barren to a degree yet picturesque withal. A score of fishing cabins, built out of the wreckage of castaway vessels, stand fronting a little cove sheltered from the



TROOPS OF BONTBUCK

winds by a sandstone ridge about a mile to the east of us; while a wooden stabling-shed and the hull of a stout old merchantman, the latter carted away piecemeal from the jagged rocks where it struck in days of old and set up here *under a reed-thatched roof*, make up the only other buildings in evidence, the Agulhas light-house being some four miles to the south-west.

Ah, what yarns the old merchantman before us might spin, could it but speak, of the strange scenes and stranger characters it knew in days of yore! Alas! here now it lies, a mere hulk, trimmed with thatch instead of canvas; with its starboard buried in the sand; a shop, or rather a fisherman's store, in its forecastle, and quarters for occasional shooting parties like ourselves aft and

amidships; a couple of doorslits cut in its sides, and its square old portholes gazing vacantly upon a sea—of sand! Only its foremast has been left standing, and from that, as in days gone by, the Union Jack is still proudly flying.

While we run down to the beach for a bathe, supper is got ready, hammocks are slung 'aboard,' and our horses and mules, cart and wagonette, are comfortably and safely housed and stowed away in the shed. The storekeeper—a merry, bronzed, silver-haired old Norseman, whose seventy odd years seem to press upon him like a featherweight—joins us at supper in the 'saloon,' and keeps us spellbound with his tales of shipwreck and disaster round and about the dreaded Cape in the days before the Suez Canal, while we smoke our pipes and sample the contents of a stone bottle of old Jamaica, which, after a deal of rummaging, he has produced out of the innermost recesses of his store in the fo'c's'le. The rum is excellent; and when, about seven o'clock next morning, we spring out of our hammocks, run down to the beach with the rising sun for a plunge in the breakers, and afterwards sit down to a breakfast of freshly caught Cape salmon and oysters unstinting, not a man of our party but feels that he has cheated old Father Time out of a couple of years at the least.

After carefully cleaning and testing our guns, we start on foot for Cape l'Agulhas, two of our boys and a couple of Malay fishermen accompanying us with supplies. Earth and air and sea literally swarm with wildfowl here. A broad greyish band of small red-legged mews passes like a huge aërial snake directly over our heads from the south-eastern horizon and terminates in a grey patch against a white sandhill about half a mile to the right. The patch grows larger and larger and larger, until the sandhill is covered. Gradually it extends and spreads like a shadow over the sandflats below. The leaders, after a short rest on the sandhill, rise and cross the western horizon; but the stream of feathered atoms from the south-east continues pouring in, resting, and then flitting—yes, continues without a break—for three whole days. I fire a charge of smallshot into the centre of the band overhead and sixteen birds come tumbling down. No mere wanton destruction this; for a more savoury pie than these sixteen little travellers supply us with a couple of days later under the manipulation of our friend the Norseman, I for one have assuredly never tasted.

Of a sudden, on rounding a small rocky headland, we come upon a belt some thirty yards wide of the most exquisitely lovely shells. These have been accumulating here for ages past and

now form a beautifully variegated border, some three miles in length, to the white surf that fringes the blue waters westwards. Shells of every shape, size, hue and colour—the beautiful little pink cowry, the delicately transparent nautilus shell, little purple corkscrews, and myriads of other brightly tinted wonders whose names I do not know--are wasting their beauty on the desert air here. The fisherman who treads them under foot does not even notice them, and the chance traveller, who could hardly fail to be entranced by their marvellous beauty, rarely visits this out-of-the-way bit of coastline.

The tide is flowing, and while our gridiron is heating over some splinters from an old wreck, and the two Malays are busy dragging an imprisoned pool for rock-fish to serve as entrées at our second breakfast—for it is close upon eleven and the sharp morning air will have none of the dyspeptic—we try a little rifle practice upon the black divers that frequent the rocks. We are all of us fairly good shots; that is to say, from a Kafir to a quail we have each and all had a try at, some time or another, and managed to come out on the right side. But do you think that for the life of us we can manage to hit these black divers as they sit perched on the rocks a hundred yards away? Not a bit of it. As well attempt to topple over a black phantom with a Martini-Henry. Koos—and Koos is considered a dead shot among people who are no mean judges of rifle-shooting in South Africa—Koos poises his rifle carefully in the nick of a five-foot rock beside us, and slowly draws the bead upon a diver sitting all unconscious of danger and intently watching the doings of a shoal of silverfish in the water at the foot of his perch. We all hold our breath; except Thys, and he remarks that he regrets he did not buy that diver's life-policy while there was time. Koos pulls the trigger, the bullet whizzes through the air, and the echoes of the discharge clatter away among the rocks. 'He's down!' we all shout together, as the bird tumbles headlong into the sea the moment the rifle goes off. Yes, to be sure, he's down; but he is up again in a second as the smoke clears away, and with a struggling silverfish in his beak too; and he sits there attending to business on his perch in the same matter-of-fact way as before, and totally ignores the presence of the six crack shots who are staring at him with their mouths wide open. 'Give me the rifle, Koos!' exclaims Thys. 'Judging from that last shot of yours, I should say that an elephant at fifty yards would be hardly big enough for you to hit this morning.' Then Thys takes the rifle. He scorns to use the notch as a rest. He stands bolt upright, six foot two in his boots,

and takes a long and steady aim. 'Bom! Whiz! *Zip-p.*' The diver merely ducks his head—the half-swallowed silverfish is still projecting from his beak—and the bullet ploughs into the sea beyond. Well, we all have a try at that and other black divers; and when, half an hour later, we adjourn in the direction of the gridiron, the birds are one and all still occupying their rocky perches and are as busy as ever catching silverfish.

'Cabo del totos Tormentos'—Cape of all the Torments—old Bartolomeo Diaz dubbed it when he steered round it in 1492; and yet, when on this splendid June morning, after a quarter of

MERELY DUCKS HIS HEAD

an hour's climb up a steep ridge, we stand upon the very southernmost edge of the African Continent and gaze upon the scene around us, Cape l'Agulhas and the waters that gently lap its base are as peaceful and as calm in aspect as though they were in some secluded spot in the quietest part of the Pacific Ocean. The lighthouse, erected in 1849, stands some fifty yards from the edge of the cliff—a red and white barred tower eighty-five feet high, whose cheery light has saved and is still saving many a vessel from certain destruction on this dangerous strip of coastline.

But what on earth are those strange and uncouth-looking

creatures that hobble and flop about on the rocks below to the right? Short-legged, short-armed, stick-headed, piebald pigmies is the nearest description I can think of the appearance presented by these penguins—for such they are—as we watch their antics from the lighthouse balcony. It seems a shame to fire upon harmless creatures such as these; but the majority of us are for securing as many Agulhas trophies as possible, including a couple of penguin skins each, and Thys stands ready with that murderous little Martini-Henry. Penguin shooting is far less interesting than black diver shooting: the penguin one does not miss; the diver one cannot hit. The expenditure of a dozen cartridges brings us nine penguins. These the Malays neatly skin for us in a trice; after which they proceed to pack the birds' carcases in a sack for household use.

'You surely do not mean to eat these things?' says Jan (of our party) to one of the Malays.

'Yes, master, we do. They are very nice and fat, although white folk think them too oily and fishy for the table.'

Two days later, I get a chance of tasting stewed penguin specially prepared for us by the old Norseman; and—well, I have eaten snails in Normandy, frogs in Paris, horsemeat sausages in Cologne, and all sorts of other questionable delicacies in all sorts of other questionable places; and I cannot conscientiously say that stewed penguin tastes worse than any one of these.

We lunch with the hospitable lighthouse keeper in his neat little cabin, and afterwards walk down to the rocks to watch some twenty fishermen haul in a seinful of fish at high water. The seine, some 150 yards in length by 10 feet or so in depth, all properly corked and leaded, is held at the one end by two stalwart fishermen standing in the surf. The rest is piled in a boat, whence it is rapidly paid out as the boat pulls ahead seawards. As soon as the seine has been paid out to the full, the boat, with one end of the seine fastened to it, begins to pull slowly shoreward, holding a semicircular course. Immediately it touches land, the fishermen divide and begin hauling in the seine from both ends. In this primitive fashion and in less than half an hour we see several hundred magnificent fish landed. Scores of delicious 20-lb. galleon and geelbek; stompneus weighing over 50 lb. each; red romans and beautiful silverfish; snoek, springers, steenbras, cod and seventy-fours; herrings, hottentots, mackerel and suchlike small fry innumerable; not to mention a shark or two, and some half dozen stingrays with barbs sharp as rapiers in their tails—a couple of tons of delicious fish in one short hour.

My only regret is the absence of the amateur snapshotter from our party; what a chance, this, for his camera!

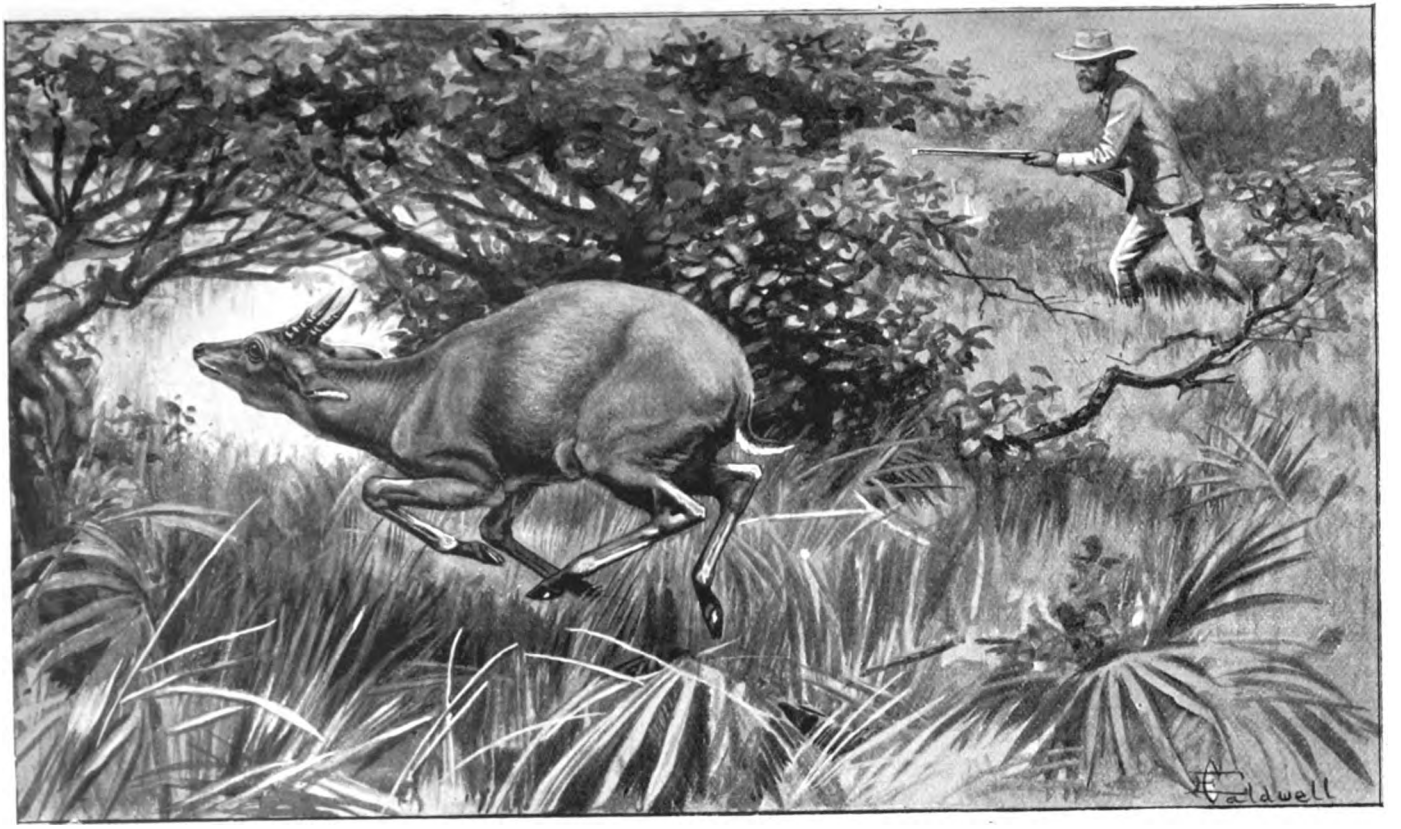
The rest of the afternoon we devote to the lighthouse keeper, who obligingly initiates us into all the mysteries of lighthouse mechanism, and entertains us with some capital stories about his experiences on this dangerous coast. Then comes dinner, pipes, grog and bedtime; and at sunrise on the following morning we are once more on the tramp. We cross the dunes behind the lighthouse, and immediately find ourselves in a perfect little sporting paradise. Wax-leaved milkwood trees, light and dark green proteæ, cactus creepers gay with pink and scarlet flowers—these intermingle and form clumps twenty feet and more in height. White, scarlet, pink and yellow bell-heather seems to glory in luxurious freedom here. Cape pheasants, partridges, and small bustards are calling on all sides; flocks of wild duck, muscovy, and geese are passing and repassing between some half dozen reed-lined lagoons scattered at random in the plain before us, the first one not a quarter of a mile from where we stand. Already our dogs are busy; both are pointing—one to the right, the other to the left; and three double-barrelled guns are gleaming steadily behind each pointer. We have stumbled upon a huge covey of partridges at the very outset; some seventy or eighty birds, all in one heap. They rise in sixes and sevens from the brushwood and heather, and we are dropping them right and left, when I hear a crash in the clump of milktrees on my right. Instinctively slipping a couple of buckshot cartridges into the empty breech of my gun, I run to the further side of the clump and come upon a magnificent 8-inch horned red *duiker* (*i.e.* 'diver;' so called from the habit this buck has of keeping his nose close to the ground while running), making off as fast as his legs will carry him. A charge of buckshot makes him turn a treble somersault; and while one of the boys is carrying him to the rear, I rejoin my friends and continue popping away at the partridges. Well, forty-seven birds out of the first covey from behind a couple of pointers may be considered good sport anywhere. Then follow about a dozen brace of pheasants, some more partridges, a couple of muscovy, several pairs of wild duck, three hares, and a grijsbuck; and then—well, it is eleven o'clock, the gridiron is brought into requisition, and we have something to eat. The Malays quickly cut a bundle of reeds, and thatch in our game under the spreading branches of a prominent milktree; after which we again push forward unhampered.

About two miles further inland we strike the Zoetendals (*i.e.*

'Sweet Valley') River, the course of which we proceed to follow. Our four men fairly stagger under the load of game, when about three o'clock we reach the mouth of this river, some four miles west of the lighthouse. Another *duiker*, two steenbuck, two grijsbuck, and a whole cartload of wild geese, wild duck, partridges, pheasants, snipe, thickknees, hares, &c., make up a collection of which any six guns might well be proud. And this does not include the proceeds of our tramp between sunrise and eleven o'clock, which still lies thatched in under the milktree behind the dunes. Our men burrow into a sandhill and quickly bury their loads until our cart shall come round and collect them in the morning.

Clambering over some thirty yards of intervening rock, we take off our boots and follow one of the Malays to where the shallow green waters of the receding tide flow over a gravelly, stony, seaweed-covered bed. What ho! oysters? Yes, to be sure, and thousands of them. The months with an 'r' spell oyster season in the northern hemisphere; the months minus an 'r' do the same in the southern. We are therefore in the very nick of time, and in half an hour collect sufficient bivalves to make a very respectable imitation of a Colchester feast. Not the neatly shaped 'native' of London fame though; no, our oysters to-day are rugged-looking molluscs, with corners and valleys innumerable about their surface. But the contents of the shells are small and delicately flavoured, and that is enough for us. The Malays (mem.: Never be without a Malay fisherman whilst tramping the South African coast), armed with a couple of stumpy table-knives, open the oysters for us; so, what with our marvellous appetites, a bottle or two of pontac, and some brown bread-and-butter, our feast is simply prodigious. Then a smoke round our driftwood fire—for it is getting chilly—another glass of pontac each, and we are off in the direction of the lighthouse, where we have been invited to spend a second night.

The coastline between the river's mouth and the lighthouse reminds one of nothing so much as the jaws of a vast assemblage of gigantic sharks and caymen lying in wait for their prey. Jagged edges of ironstone rock shoot out hither and thither, projecting tooth-like every now and again above the eddying, surging waters. Pieces of wreckage, some of them ready to crumble into dust at a touch, others looking as fresh as though the score of years that has passed and gone since they came here were but so many months, are lying wedged in between the rocks, or else half buried in the drift-sand along the line of high



A MAGNIFICENT 8-INCH HORNED RED DUIKER

water. But we are each and all of us too tired to stand moralising here over the history of these cast-up relics; and when about an hour later we reach the lighthouse, we do not waste any time going over (and exaggerating) our day's adventures, but turn in at once and go to sleep.

Early the following morning one of our boys is despatched to Struys Bay for the cart wherewith to collect and bring in the game. This done, our hospitable friend, the lighthouse-keeper, accepts, under protest, a fat duiker-buck and a dozen brace of birds, the rest being sent under escort of the Malays and our boys to 'The Old Ship' at Struys Bay to await our arrival, while we ourselves follow on foot. South Africa! O thou Land of Hospitality! Turtle soup, oysters, mew pie, stewed penguin, shark steak, grilled venison, devilled hare, roast pheasant, roast partridge, roast duck, roast goose, and ever so many other things *ad lib.*—all these we find awaiting us at the semi-marine castle of the old Norseman. And towards sunset two big barrels of oysters packed in sea-water come round for us in a boat as a parting gift from the lighthouse-keeper. Never, never shall I forget the merry afternoon and evening of our last day's stay at 'The Old Ship' on the southern edge of the Dark Continent.

And as I sit writing here in my dingy little sanctum not a thousand miles from the heart of London City, my thoughts often and often stray and flit across the blue ocean to that distant, out-of-the-way bit of the world, and more than once have I caught myself saying to myself, 'Oh, how I wish I were there to-day!'

QUEER RECOVERIES

BY THE LADY MIDDLETON

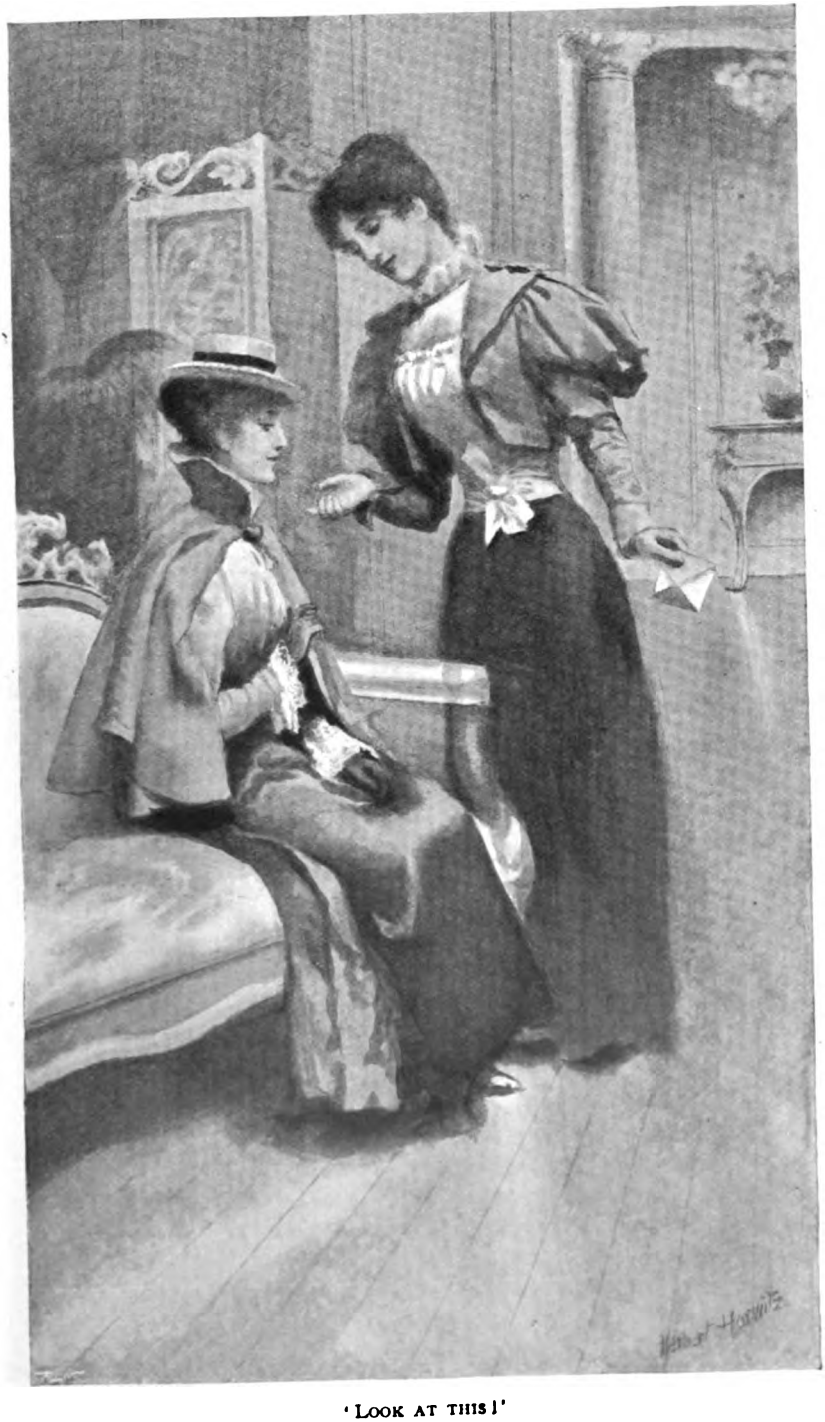
'BUT you ought to write these down,' said my friend, to whom I had been recounting some experiences. 'They really are odd stories, and when you die they'll be lost.'

'When I die there will be odder stories written,' said I; at which my friend laughingly replied: 'You mean biographically!' I looked reprehension, but he laughed more, and I felt I was getting the worst of it, so e'en promised.

Whether the best sporting magazine of the day will consider these 'queer recoveries' in the order of things sporting I know not, but it shall have the offer of my experiences in the fulfilling of my promise.

My kind old friend, the wife of the well-known Squire Villebois, gave a ball in her house in Belgrave Square. A very jolly ball it was, and we danced hard and late. Next day I went to inquire for our hostess, and to talk things over with her. When we had discussed the company, their clothes, flirtations, virtues, possibly their failings, my hostess led me through the now empty rooms. Mine was really a morning call, and they were still unswept and untidy.

'Yes,' said my hostess, prosaically responding to a quotation from Tom Moore which occurred to me, 'but they leave all sorts



'LOOK AT THIS!'

of bits, some valuable; and it's a bother tracing owners. Look at this!' and she produced from her pocket an envelope, whence she drew and laid on my palm a glittering object.

It was a big knob of green enamel, on which was a spray or arabesque in diamonds. It was only a half-sphere; the other side was rough, as if it had been fastened on to something.

'How pretty!' I exclaimed; 'it's off a locket or bracelet, and is sure to be asked for. I would wait and see, and not trouble to advertise.' She agreed, and I took leave, forgetting the incident immediately.

The following night I found myself sitting at a party, next the late Lady Falmouth, with whom I was slightly acquainted. We entered into conversation, and she made some gesture with her hand, which drew my attention to a bracelet she was wearing. It was a broad band of gold, on which were two large knobs of green enamel; on each of these an ornament in diamonds. Then there was a hole in the gold, at the exact place where a third knob might be.

'Lady Falmouth,' I said, interrupting her in my surprise, 'you've lost part of your bracelet!'

'So I have,' she said, looking at it; 'I never noticed it. Where can it be?' and she shook her dress.

'Not here,' I volunteered, 'but you were at Mrs. Villebois's ball last night?'

'Don't know her!' was my somewhat abrupt answer.

'Well,' I insisted, 'your ornament is in Belgrave Square!'

'Impossible,' she rejoined.

Here was a mystery; for decidedly the knob I had seen that morning was one of the triplet belonging to Lady Falmouth's bracelet.

She had not lent it on the previous evening, and if its fellow were in London it was unlikely that two enamel and diamond knobs would be lost one evening. Problem: How had this knob found its way to Belgrave Square? The solution proved a real 'Queer Recovery.'

Lady Falmouth had dined, the evening of the Villebois ball, with the C. B.'s, and Mrs. C. B. had taken her daughter on to the ball later in the evening, one or other of them bearing in some fold of her dress the lost ornament, which dropped out quietly and was found in an out-of-way corner where the searching housemaid's morning quest had brought it to light.

Another queer recovery more intimately concerned myself. I inherited from an ancestress a really fine parure of seed and other

pearls. Why I wished to part with them then puzzles me now, for they were really beautiful. It is not well to toss away things of beauty—things that have taken brain and time to achieve, and are fair in workmanship and material alike—merely because they are 'not the fashion.' That freakish dame is too much considered, and the careless irreverence that curses our epoch makes folks all too ready to destroy what does not appeal to their individual, and probably uncultivated, tastes.

Nowadays, wiser, I should have put the ornaments in a cabinet if I did not wish to wear them Then, I took them to a dealer in such wares, who exchanged them for some trifle, remaining of course much the master of the situation.

But first, luckily for me, I had picked from among the despised treasures some dozen or so of the finest and largest pearls. These, set in diamond points, made a pair of earrings, wheel-shaped, which became great favourites with their wearer.

On a certain summer's day in 1880 my husband and I went up from Notts to spend one week in London. We went straight to a hotel in Albemarle Street, whence, having deposited our luggage, &c., we set forth to shop in Bond Street, passing through the then new arcade between the two thoroughfares. On returning to the hotel and removing my hat and veil, I found I was minus one earring.

Not finding it about our rooms, we telegraphed back to Notts and to St. Pancras Station, and took all measures that occurred to us as likely to tend towards recovering the jewel. Next day my husband was struck down with an illness that kept us ten months in London, and my earring was forgotten. When convalescence was fairly established, and I could interest myself in extraneous matters, it became an object for walks to visit various jewellers in different quarters of the town, and get estimates or plans for either matching the forlorn earring or setting it in some other form for wear. At last I went to the establishment of the

late Mr. Turnor, in Bond Street, and his head man advised me to leave the ornament with him for consideration.

A few days later I received a letter from this person requesting me to call, as he believed he had recovered the missing treasure. I went, and, sure enough, there was my property, uninjured!

It seems that in passing through the Bond Street arcade, I had hitched out the earring (then unsecured by a catch to its hook) on raising my veil to look into a window, and it fell, unnoticed, on the pavement. There it was found by a sweeping shopboy, who took it to his master. The man proved to be a friend of Mr. Turnor's foreman, and, dining with him a night or two after I had shown the fellow-earring, happened to consult Mr. —— on his treasure-trove. It was of course instantly recognised as 'marrow' (Scoticé, 'fellow') to the one I had deposited in the shop. Thus were the pair reunited after many months, and I have them now, safely hitched on with a catch to the hook.

On the subject of pearls comes the memory of an adventure to my father-in-law's studs. He had three very large and fine pearls, which he wore, as was then 'modish,' in his shirt-front. Standing among the vast crowd of guests at the Guards' ball given to the Princess of Wales soon after her marriage, he happened to glance downwards, and saw one of his studs was gone. He told his daughter beside him of his misfortune, when she, suddenly recollecting that lately she had watched with a vague interest the meandering of a bead impelled by the long sweep of some ladies' gowns as they moved inch by inch (owing to the crush) along the floor, made a dash in the direction where she had lost sight of it. Luckily, she lit upon, not a bead, but the lost pearl, unscrewed from off its gold stud. That was a very lucky, if not a very queer, recovery.

Two of those pearls, being large for present fashion in studs, were made into earrings; wearing which, one October Sunday in the Highlands, I missed an earring on returning from the kirk.

Of course, the whole place was hunted over, kirk-house, graveyard, paths, every spot likely and unlikely, and in a few hours the population all round became excited over the loss of the lady's 'pairrl'—which, however, remained lost. To militate against chances of recovery came a heavy fall of snow, unusual at that season, so low down by the sea. I gave up my pearl for lost.

When, in a couple of days, the snow had about vanished, I accidentally picked up my earring on a back garden-path, where it had lain for many hours under a whiteness lovelier than its own.

A last, and I trust final, escape of one of these pearls was when, after a round of calls one afternoon in London, I was admitted at the last house I drove up to, and, as I got out of the carriage, adjusted my veil. Happily, into my very palm dropped a pearl, whose little gold loop, attaching it to the diamond top, had selected that instant to wear *quite* through. I would warn wearers of valuable ornaments frequently to look to their 'attachments,' as the swaying of some pendant naturally wears the gold ring or loop.

The recoveries, queer or commonplace, of lost and missing rings is often a theme of story, and I have heard several worth noting.

A connection of my family was fishing on the River Beauly, in Inverness-shire, with a friend, who chanced to be wearing a ring which he valued greatly, as it was given to an ancestor of his by a famous poet. The friend, disregarding warnings, waded into some rough 'white' water, boiling into fizz, and about two feet deep. He proceeded to slip up and sit down therein with more precipitation than care, and, when helped out of his bath, missed the treasured ring. Fancying he could not have lost it on that occasion, though he had not previously noticed its absence, he offered a reward to its possible finder.

My family connection was fishing on the same spot some days later, and, his friend's adventure coming to mind, he happened to look down into the water, at a moment when the 'boil' lulled, and he could see the deeps.

Down in the bottom lay that ring. He made a diving plunge with his hand, and lo! the lost circlet caught on to his finger.

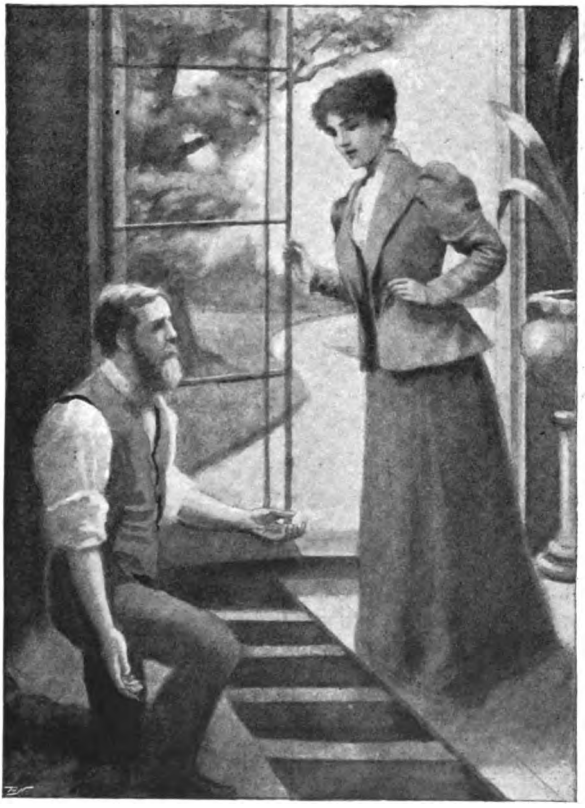
A French gentleman told me of a very 'queer' recovery.

A lady lost a most valuable ring. Every search was made, as the ring had certainly not left the particular apartment in which she was; therefore, the ground of search was not wide.

But nothing was heard or seen of the missing jewel for many years, when, on raising the flooring of the room for some repairs they found the skeleton of a mouse, with the lost ring wedged

round its neck! Of course, the ring had fallen edgeways through some crevice in the planking, and the mouse, half grown at the time, had slipped its little head into the circle and grown into strangulation. A fearful and tragic end—for the mouse!

Two men I know were curates in a large London parish, and shared a house. A lady relative of one of them came on a visit,



A TRAGIC END—FOR THE MOUSE

during which she lost a ring. After the usual searching it was deemed hopelessly lost.

Time passed; the two friends left London and broke up the joint *ménage*, each taking his portion of the 'plenishing.'

Some six years afterwards, the same lady went on a visit to her relative, in his new quarters, and, chancing to slip her hand into the part of a chair where seat and arms joined, felt a hard

object, and, drawing it out, recovered the ring she had evidently lost while sitting in the selfsame chair years before.

Lord Eustace Cecil tells me the following very curious ring-recovery story, especially valuable as being an experience of the narrator himself, and therefore well authenticated. His father had given him a gold signet ring, containing a key, when he first entered the army. In the year 1857 he was playing with some junior members of the family in the Avenue at Hatfield, about a mile from the house, when his ring slipped off his finger, and fell among the masses of dead leaves with which November was then strewing the ground.

After a fruitless search, Lord Eustace most reluctantly, as he naturally valued its possession, gave up all hope of retrieving his property. About seventeen years passed away, and in December 1874 he was again staying at Hatfield, when one day at lunch his sister-in-law and hostess remarked: 'A very odd thing happened yesterday. In the West garden'—at least a mile from the spot where the ring was lost in 1857—'the gardener, in turning up some old soil, found what seems to me to be an old George III. ring, with the family crest upon it!'

The 'find' was shown to Lord Eustace, who at once claimed it as his lost signet, presumably carted away with that November leafage, and consigned to the garden as leaf-mould, there finding a grave many feet deep in the often dug-over beds for seventeen long years. The key was completely rusted away.

Apparently, Lord Eustace adds, this ring and he are destined to be inseparable; for quite recently, in Ireland, he again missed it, and after looking about everywhere was in despair, as he could learn nothing of its whereabouts. On returning to Dorsetshire his servant found the ring in the bottom of a hat-box, which Lord Eustace had himself packed previously to starting homewards.

A brother of ours once recovered in a remarkable fashion a spoil of his fowling-piece. There are a row of old stew-ponds, at varied levels, lying below the house at home. There is within the house a specimen of what I once saw described as 'mouldy poultry in glazed boxes;' only this one is not 'mouldy,' and is a *sandpiper*. This poor little bird was shot one morning near the stew-ponds from a window, by a brother of my husband. It was only winged, fluttered away on the water, and was at once absorbed by a pike.

An elder brother, fishing in the afternoon of the same day in one of these ponds, caught a large pike, and in the stomach of this freshwater shark was found the bird—intact.

Mr. Montague Thorold tells me the following shark story. When he was serving aboard H.M.S. 'Fort' (Admiral Sir Harry Keppel) off the West Coast of Africa, the Admiral had been greatly

THE RECOVERY OF THE RING

annoyed at two monkeys, belonging to the men, which had torn up papers in his cabin. In consequence, he ordered that every monkey should be sent ashore when the ship touched at Fernando Po.

One little monkey resisted capture, and ran along to the end of the flying jib-boom, which seemed near enough to the shore to make a leap thereto possible. Poor little Jacko, however, had miscalculated; and he fell into the sea, where a shark promptly

swallowed him. That afternoon, the men, fishing with a pork-baited hook, caught a shark within whose interior was the little monkey's body, and also a marine's button, thrown overboard by some sailor.

Mr. Thorold was witness of another queer recovery much nearer home. His friend, Sir Thomas Whichcote of Aswarby Park, Lincolnshire, was in the habit of carrying always about with him a little purse containing a couple of sovereigns and two small keys.

Hunting one day, he jumped a fence into an arable field, and the purse flew out of his pocket. He returned to the spot next day, and searched thoroughly for the purse, which, having been made by a great friend, was very precious to him; but he failed to find it. Four years afterwards Mr. Thorold was staying at Aswarby, when the butler brought in on a tray the missing valuable, which had been found by a boy tending crows. The queerest part of this recovery is that the field must have been at least three times under plough since the loss.

We own a shapeless spoon which was recovered from the stomach of a pig about to be converted into pork; and a Court official told the following spoon story to a friend of mine.

A lady was supping at a Queen's ball, wearing a dress trimmed, as was then the fashion, with perpendicular pleats in front, stitched across at intervals, which could form involuntary pockets for sundry objects, crumbs, &c. After that ball, one of the gold spoons was missed by the Palace servants whose duty it was to count over the plate. There was a great search, but no result. The following year the above-mentioned lady attended a drawing-room in the very skirt she had worn at the ball of the previous season, and as she bent curtseying before her sovereign, the pleats in her skirt opened out, and at the Queen's very feet dropped—the missing gold spoon!

Quite one of the queerest recoveries I ever heard of was contained in the story told me by our chaplain and vicar, who got it from an old man in Derbyshire as having happened within his ken.

A doctor was belated on his rounds in the midst of a lonely moor, and suddenly found himself in the darkness confronted by a stalwart footpad or tramp. This man caught the reins of the doctor's horse, and, on its rider bending down to discern through the dusk the action of his assailant, his would-be robber clutched

him by the throat, and in their struggle got a finger into the doctor's mouth—which was bitten clean off by the half-choked victim.

The footpad then let go his hold; and, the doctor's animal becoming unmanageable, he was compelled to let his foe slink away into the gloom.

But he pocketed the severed finger!

Next day our doctor rode round to all the village inns in the district, seeking for a man with an injured hand, whereby to trace the marauder. At last he came upon a fellow in one of these hostels who had his hand tied up in rags, and immediately asked what ailed him?

'Hurt myself,' was the curt and sullen reply. The doctor asked to see the wound, but was refused.

On stating his profession, however, and using persuasion, by likelihood of solace to the pain the man was evidently suffering, he at last succeeded in obtaining a sight of the uncovered hand. There was the stump of a digit, severed at its second joint.

'My good man,' said the medico, 'wait a moment. I have something that may fit that finger, and, gripping tightly the prisoned palm of the astonished robber, he clapped on the missing portion!

Tableau! What justice was meted to the convicted felon and his queerly recovered finger-joint the story does not tell.

One hears occasionally of curious monitions, spiritual, occult, leading to the recovery of prized objects. A simple but notable case is that of a friend of ours who went, some three years ago, to dine at a club in Cairo, having previously changed his day to evening clothes, and laid aside with the former the pin he wore habitually in his tie. It was a remarkable pin, formed of a small medal set in gold, unique in itself, and specially valued on account of its associations.

Having dined and moved from the dining-room our friend overheard some person remark that a pin had been found in the club. Why he should at once have felt that this bit of information concerned him he could not and did not argue, but he at once asked to see the find; and there was brought to him his own medal-pin, left in the hotel some quarter-mile away, with his discarded day costume. It was odd enough that the pin must have got stuck in his evening suit, and been borne safely through the streets to the club, but by far the queerest part of this recovery is the immediate flash of inspired assurance that the discovery of

a pin in so unexpected a situation should be interesting to him, who was wholly unconscious of loss!

Do our guardian angels concern themselves with such matters? The loss would have recalled sorrows, and our friend was spared.

Of watch stories there are many. At Pitfour, in Aberdeenshire, a gentleman, shooting, lost his gold watch in a wood. A whole year afterwards a party were lunching at the same spot, when one of their number, kicking about the dead leaves, turned up the watch, which proved to be so well made and closely fitted that it was wholly uninjured by damp. I wish I knew its maker.

But surely no watch ever had such narrow escapes as, or was more queerly recovered than, one that belonged to the late Mr. Bass, and is now in possession of Miss Octavia Thornewill, sister to his daughter-in-law, Lady Burton. I give its history, as near as may be, in Miss Thornewill's own language:—

Early in the forties, the late Mr. Bass bought himself a new watch, a small gold one with a white face; he hated heavy hunting watches, and liked little light ones.

He was hunting with the Meynell Hounds in the winter of 1847, and on his return late one evening found his watch was missing. The run had been a very long and twisty one, with much jumping, so he made up his mind to the loss, and did not think it worth while to take any steps towards its recovery.

In the following summer, however, his watch was brought to him by a ploughman, who had picked it up in a field. As the case was uninjured, the watch was sent to Geneva for new works, and on its return was taken into wear.

Mr. Bass, returning one evening with the late Lord S. from the House of Commons, found on their way that a fire was going on in Hobart Place, Eaton Square, and as it was the custom then for onlookers to take part and form lines to hand buckets up to the firemen, the gentlemen readily joined. Mr. Bass suddenly felt a switch at his pocket, and his watch was gone.

He instantly pounced on a man close to him, being sure he saw a hand draw back from his vicinity. This man struggled violently at first, but Lord S., a very powerful and heavy 'physique,' seized him, and nearly broke the fellow's back by bending it down.

The police now arrived and searched the man all over—boots, trousers, coat, and he never uttered a syllable.

The policeman was just saying to Mr. Bass that he feared a mistake in the person of the culprit, when the second constable,

a stalwart Irishman, suddenly flashed his bull's-eye in the prisoner's face, exclaiming, 'By Jabers, he has it in his chake!' (cheek); and sure enough, there it was, and fished out little the worse!

The man got nine months.

The watch had an easy time after this for some years till one very hot September day, at Tulchan (Mr. Bass's Highland shooting in Morayshire), he was out on the moors, and took off his coat and unbuttoned his waistcoat for relief from the oppressive weather.

He was then about four miles from home, and, feeling tired, turned his pony's head to return thither, when his dog suddenly pointed. Mr. Bass got off his pony, and, walking to the point, shot his bird and remounted, but had not gone a hundred yards before he missed his watch.

Several men accompanied their master, and all returned to the place where the dog pointed, remembering that just before the point Mr. Bass had looked at the watch, and consulted with his keeper as to whether he should reach the lodge by tea-time.

The spot was all young heather, very thick and close, and, after an ineffectual search, the party returned home. Next day there was a tremendous organised hunt for the lost watch; a party of sixteen or seventeen people turned the heather with sticks, and worried every inch, but with no luck. Mr. Bass then offered a reward of 5*l.* to the possible finder, and that part of the moor became a regular Sunday resort for searchers all through the autumn.

At last hope was abandoned, and people began to forget the incident, when, two years after, Mr. Bass was again returning from shooting, riding the same old pony over the same bit of ground where he had lost his watch, and was recalling the fact to his keeper. Suddenly, up rose a blackcock, which Mr. Bass shot from the pony; and there lives to this day the old gillie who, stooping to pick up the game, found under its very corpse the lost watch and chain!

Of course the works of the watch had once more to be renewed, but the case was uninjured, and is the same that figured on all three occasions. I now have the watch, but it has little chance of getting lost with me, as it rarely goes out of doors.

Three men (adds Miss Thornewill) who were present on this last occasion are still alive.

I do not think any watch story can beat this, but a queer recovery that occurred within the same ken is worth noting.

A lady was returning from accompanying her host on a deer-stalking expedition on 'pony-back,' and when she reached the house she found that two gold brooches or pins, used to fasten her skirt, were both gone.

The stalker, however, returned to the place where the ponies were mounted and found one of the lost articles, which was perhaps a fairly natural result of his search; but the real queer thing was the re-appearance of brooch number two, which was brought about ten days later by a lad, who found it stuck in the hoof of his horse! He was bringing a load of coals along the very road by which the stalking party had returned, and the pin must have lain there till unconsciously lifted by the horny-*footed* son of toil!

'Queer recoveries' in etymology appear a not unfitting wind up to my little collection of 'oddments.' Some of these etymological unravellings seem to me very queer, and I take a certain amount of credit and *kudos* to myself in the matter, deeming them if not *vero* at least *ben trovato.*

Many of my hunting male connexions make use of an expression which, once familar and applied, seems very descriptive. 'My dear fellow, I assure you they' (hounds perhaps) 'were just going *hell-for-leather.*'

Now 'hell-for-leather' has no visible relation to pace, but when the phrase is assimilated, describing a certain rate of speed which, over the Channel, might be translated 'ventre-à-terre,' it becomes absolutely Addisonian in neatness of suggestion.

But it also strikes one, dissected, as a not very lady-like mode of expression, even in these days of latitude of speech (and bicycles). So I exercised much self-control and avoided its use, till one day, going home from covert and cogitating profoundly on the matter, as bursts a shaft of light from the o'erclouded sun, striking to silver the storm-shadowed sea, so burst on my sense—the derivation of that sporting phrase!

Helfe Leder! The German words, 'help or save leather,' *i.e.* hide or skin. As one would say, 'Gallop to save your skin,' or even 'your scalp,' like 'run to save his neck,' &c.

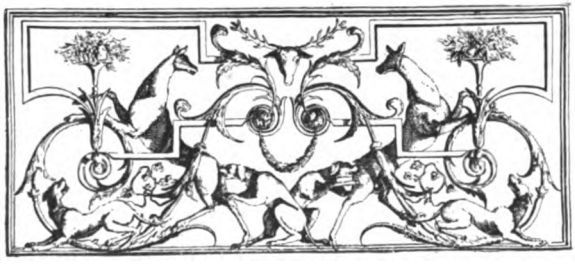
So I can now say 'Helfe Leder' with a clear conscience.

'Pillilew' (phonetic) is another pet expression with some of these Nimrods when speaking of the negotiation of big jumps. 'The mare went at it "pillilew."' What a picture is presented to the initiated soul! The big drain, with perhaps a rotten take-off,

and a half-leaning post and rail obstacle at the further side; the pack going 'Helfe Leder' in the distance; the half-thought, 'She can and she shall' flashing through the rider's mind. The 'Now then, old girl,' that breaks from his lips as he presses her sides, and just lifts her bridle-rein (she needs no rowel-reminders). The gallant responsive lift of her dainty head and increased stretch of pace, and 'pillilew' they go—never stopping to see if the clearing was the 30 feet, or may be a couple over. (They say our 32 feet wide music-room was built to commemorate such a jump by Henry Lord Middleton of sporting fame.)

Well, after serious thought amounting to study, I think I have disentangled 'pillilew' from the maze of fibre that surrounds its root. If you take the idea that in France 'pis le lieu' (worse the place), just the same as in England, the rash or bolder spirits would the harder go—*i.e.* 'worse the place, best the pace.' Only, with the clipping, save-trouble style of the present epoch, our gay sportsmen leave the second half of the sentence to be understood.

I wonder whether it has struck anyone that the military ejaculation 'Great Scott' is only (surely) the somewhat profanely used 'Grüs Gott' of the Deutscher soldier-officer?



HAFFLINGER HORSES

BY CLARE SOREL STRONG

If circus-masters were not wedded

> (To the) lathy horse, all legs and length,
> With blood for bone, and speed for strength,

they would buy Hafflingers. They are the oddest, and—if it is allowable to say so—the most conversational of equine companions. A circus 'manned' by Hafflingers might retrench in the item of the clown, for these horses are wags. They regard life from a comic standpoint. They have been spoken of as the *Dachshunde* of the stable. Probably, being laughed at for generations is the cause that the little 'Daxes' go about their daily tasks 'like noble boys at play,' even when their crowns are bald, their muzzles grizzled, their teeth mere relics of the fangs that once have been.

That the Hafflinger should excite mirth is no wonder. He is like the Dachshund in the absurd length of his body, and in his rudimentary fins of legs. There is room enough for brains in his big, plain head. ('Fiddle-headed,' some people call him.) He has the keen, small eye of the elephant. His ears are aristocratically small, while his feet are regretably large, though they are hard and useful feet. Is he a cross between a Suffolk punch and a hippopotamus? If so, it would be hard to say which parent he most 'favours.'

The Hafflingers come from a valley of that name in the Tyrol. They have a great local reputation, and one of long standing; and the coachmen (vetturini) who spend their summers

taking travelling-carriagefuls of tourists over Alpine passes know the value of a team of these stout and hearty little gees. They measure from 14½ hands to 15–1, and take a bigger girth than anything in an ordinary stud. Needless to say, not speed, but endurance, is their strong point as roadsters. *As friends*, I do not hesitate to say their charm lies in their originality of mind, and their turn for practical joking.

Hänsli, Booby, and Hercules are my most intimate friends among Hafflingers; but I have had a patting-and-sugar-acquaintance with a number of the race, round about Meran, and in Switzerland. I was introduced to Booby and Hercules in this way: Wishing to take friends to see Fragsburg, and rains having made a bad road worse, an obliging *Oberkellner* said: 'I tell you what I'll do. I'll secure two horses for you that, if they can't get along on their feet, will sit and slide down the bad places!' And that is what they did! Booby was then a 'boy' of fourteen; Hercules was two years older.

I next chanced to see them in their yard. They were dashing about in short rabbit-gallops, lashing out occasionally; and, with ears tucked down below their hogged manes, they often rushed open-mouthed at their owner, Herr Zopft, and his stableman. I could not believe my eyes! That two good horses should be allowed to gallop furiously, and make short turns, in a cobble-stone-paved courtyard; that their owner, instead of approaching them, should, on his part, also make rabbit-like dashes into doorways, or across to the stable pump; that he should not even order the stableman to tackle them—all this was more than mysterious. I determined to remonstrate; but, before going down to speak to Zopft, I had to prepare my German oration; and while angrily floundering about for words, a servant happened to come into the room, and explained that men and horses were engaged in playing 'Tig-touch-iron'! The horses were allowed to 'catch' (*i.e.* bite or kick) the men, unless the men were touching the gates, the pump, or the stable doors. It was the duty of the men to keep moving from one place to the other. Naturally, the man farthest from Booby and Hercules would be the one at any given moment to make a dash. It was beautiful to see the horses, with a squeal and a clatter, rush from the opposite corner of the yard at the last man to stir. They made a fierce show of kicking and biting each other, but did no mischief whatever. When Zopft thought the game had lasted long enough, he cracked the long whip he carried, and the two playful chestnuts, protesting all the way, withdrew to their stable.

Afterwards, Zopft told me a quarter of an hour's 'tig' exercised his horses better than leading and riding them for two hours. The weather was wet; they liked the game; 'tig' occupied less time than any equally effective exercise; so the stout cobs took their ease in their loose boxes for twenty-three hours and three-quarters per diem, and, a fine interval being chosen, indulged in a scamper of fifteen minutes of veritable horse-play!

I asked Zopft if his horses would play with a stranger. He said: 'If you can run!' with the Tyrolese twinkle in his eyes. I tried; and Booby caught me almost as soon as I stirred. He took me, gently, but firmly, by the button, across which my *pince-nez* was planted. He gave me a great shaking, and dropped me quite quietly on my knees, hurting me not in the least, and never breaking my glasses! After that, he declined to play any more. Letting down a portentous length of under-lip, he looked the picture of contempt, as he stood, for long, by the pump, surveying a too-easy victim. Neither would he and Hercules play with their master or his man, later in the day. I had spoilt sport without meaning it!

One day, I rode Booby up the long zigzags that lead to the top of the Egger. The saddletree was broken, and it was difficult to keep in position. Booby tried all the time, as we toiled up the ascent, to catch my right foot. By keeping a sharp look-out, I got to the top without his having achieved his purpose. But the descent, on the curious, quilted leather pad, miscalled a side-saddle, was more difficult, and Booby captured my foot within a mile of the start. He did not punish me at all. He shook my boot as I would shake a friend's hand—kindly and cordially. That done, he left my foot alone. It was just one of his characteristic practical jokes. He would *pretend* that his strong teeth would close over my toes and grind them agonisingly. Having caught me and treated me benignly, it was no use playing *that* game again for a while. Anyone could see his line of reasoning. Hercules was the cleverer of the two in everything, and Booby had an admiring love for his elder brother which it was pretty to witness.

Hänsli was only rising five when I knew him. He had all the engaging ways of a true Hafflinger, but was the most obstinate of the race I ever knew. He hated being ridden, though he was brisk and hard-working in single and double harness, whether in a carriage or a sleigh. He was best of all, perhaps, as a wheeler in tandem. However employed, it was enough to speak to him. Young as he was, he understood

verbal directions marvellously; would wait alone with the sleigh in the long, unlovely street of Davos; would turn for a word in ugly corners, without touch of reins or whip; would come from afar to a friend, when called, if his driver permitted; and learnt in five minutes to pick a saddle-pocket where carrots had been hidden. Nothing would induce him to take a fence. He preferred to risk his limbs on a rotten plank-bridge rather than jump two feet of a cut. Whip and spur were of no more use than blandishments, or the devices of cunning. I never found any horse but Hänsli that could not be made, in one way or another, to cross a tiny water-cut in a meadow. Terror and anger seemed to take possession of him whenever the thing was proposed. He glared at the 'obstacle,' and became immovable as a rock. If forced to move, he would only move backwards. Beating made him trumpet through his nostrils, and rear. Taking him by the head, and tugging at him, made him use his forefeet as if he were training for a pugilist. Lashing his flanks entailed giving him some degree of head-room, by which he profited to make a bolt, to right or left, according as the lash might be falling. To rush him at a fence was equally impossible. He would neither be cheated, driven, nor led into jumping. I have fought till reins and whip were broken; and when he had beaten me, and my feelings were sore, Hänsli, as became the victor, would 'make much of me;' gleam kindness out of his little eye; rub me all over with his fiddle-head; kiss me with his long, rough tongue; and, by every means in a horse's power, try to re-establish friendly relations. One could not remain angry with the fellow, though many a day he made me feel sick with helpless vexation. He who had had the blows, and exhibited the marks of the spur, bore no malice. How could his rider?

SOME BOWLING AND FIELDING YARNS

BY W. J. FORD

Is there any cricketer who has not a soft place in his heart of hearts for his own bowling? Is there any cricketer who is not open to a little gentle flattery on the point? Very few, I fancy; so I commend to any man who is getting up a side the formula, 'Do come and help us on Monday, old man; we're awfully short of bowling.' It is the most effective way of filling up a team, and knocks fits out of 'being well done,' 'capital wicket,' 'very pleasant fellows,' 'no bowling on the other side.' Of course the tip is pretty well known, but it is not universally known; indeed if knowledge were universal, even the BADMINTON MAGAZINE would have a comparatively small mission in life. Observe, too, the subtlety of this form of flattery: it commits the captain to nothing; it secures him, we may assume, a useful cricketer, who has always regarded himself a bowler, but has, perhaps, been continuously overlooked by captain after captain. Now is his chance: he has been asked to play—he is quite clear about this—as a bowler and nothing else, and he will shift any engagement, short of his wedding, to be present at the match. Yet the wily captain may be well provided with bowlers and short of batting, but he has strengthened the latter by a stroke of diplomacy, before which the veriest Bismarck of cricket is bound to give way. As I have hinted already, if you want to make a man your friend for life, flatter him—not too grossly—about his bowling. The curious part of the whole thing is that good bowling, and, for that matter, bad bowling, gets but little recognition either from hand or pen. However, the public and the press are growing more appr[illegible]e daily, so that some of these

days we may hear a successful bowler received with quite a warmth of applause when he has done a big thing.

Bowling yarns are quite hard things to get together; every one is absorbed in batting; but here is a happy expression about rather a burly cricketer—well, in short, myself. We—an M.C.C. team—were somewhat in a dilemma for bowling, especially as a tremendous wind was blowing straight down the pitch. The captain consulted one of the professionals, and this is what I overheard. 'Who shall we put on against the wind?' 'Try Mr. Ford, sir; he's big, and *likes something to lean against.*' It was a compliment to avoirdupois, and I got a bowl for once in my life.

Here's another sweetly pretty story, quite true, too. A certain regimental side was going down to play against Rossall, and being very short of bowling secured the services of Watson, the Lancashire bowler, then in the zenith of his powers. That the boys might not be frightened by the name and the fame of the best slow bowler in England, he played as Corporal Atkins, or under some other *sobriquet.* Result: he got a few wickets, but one of the boys made over 200, and the whole side something nearer 400 than 300! A similar 'sell' occurred once at Ardingly College; the M.C.C. sent a side down to play a boys-plus-masters eleven, and included in this side was poor Fred Morley, who was then the best fast bowler in the country. The M.C.C. captain, if rumour speaks true, won the toss, and wishing to give the school a chance sent Ardingly in to bat. And bat they did, making over 600 runs, and treating Morley's best as if they were spoon-meat for babes. Still it is fair to state that G. Brann, W. Newham and W. Blackman were included in the school eleven, and that in those days it was wise to go to Ardingly rich in bowling if you wanted to have a knock yourself.

It is always amusing when bad bowlers succeed where better men have failed, and there is an entertaining story told in the Badminton 'Cricket' of C. F. H. Leslie's success in a match played in Australia. Yet he himself was a victim in the 'Varsity match to J. E. K. Studd, by no means a regular bowler of the Cambridge team, but who broke up the apparently interminable partnership of Leslie and W. H. Patterson by means of a full-pitch —if my memory is correct—which was hit into long-leg's hands.

Fred Morley was not much of a batsman—in fact, he was one of the worst, not excepting J. C. Shaw, who ever played good cricket; yet he had a sneaking fancy for his powers, I suppose, as, being asked if he was sufficiently recovered from a recent accident to play for England *v* Australia, he replied, 'Oh yes, but I sha'n't be able to bowl!' And Peate, who was in at the death

in the seven-runs international match at the Oval, must have had some regard for his own skill; for, being lectured for a blind hit by which he lost his wicket, the last wicket, he said that he felt bound to have a hit 'as he couldn't trust Mr. Studd.' Now 'Mr. Studd'—C. T.—had scored more than one century against the Australians that year. These, however, are only 'bowling yarns' by courtesy.

The following is not bad. It has been told to me as true; if it is not, and if Alfred Shaw sees it, and if his feelings are hurt, I apologise most amply. However, he was captain of the Nottinghamshire side some years ago, Morley and he invariably opening the bowling. After a match in which Morley had borne the burden and heat of the day, bowling for a long time against the wind and up the hill, some one said to him, 'How came you to be bowling against the wind all day?' 'Well, sir, you see Shaw's captain; and he said to me "I'm going to bowl this end; you can bowl whichever end you jolly well please;" so I had to bowl against the wind.'

Bowlers have many dodges; few had more than the wily David Buchanan, and a rare good bowler he was. In my undergraduate time he was bowling against us at Cambridge on a very wet day, and I happened to be one of the few who made any headway against him; but he was quite a match for me; for, instead of his usual slow medium pace, he suddenly slung up a fast 'yorker,' having previously covered the ball with sawdust. A yellow globe, moving at a great pace, was so startling that it had the desired effect. Here is another good yarn, about Crossland, sometime of the Lancashire eleven. He was playing for Liverpool and District against an Australian side; it was a very hot day and Bonnor was well set, when Crossland was called upon to have another try. 'Beg pardon, sir, but can I go and get a bottle of "pop" first?' 'No, of course not; have a ball or two down at the side, and go and bowl.' So Crossland 'had a ball or two down at the side,' and so fast were they that the wicket-keeper let them go, and the spectators applauded the mere pace of those trial balls. The first ball bowled in earnest took Bonnor's wicket—and it was a slow!

Why do batsmen so often take bowlers into their confidence? A little conversation between the overs or during lunch is a pleasant relaxation, but there is no reason why batsmen should give themselves away by such remarks as, 'I hate slows,' 'I never could play a fast yorker,' 'So-and-so's bowling is awfully hard to see from the pavilion end.' It's a wise man, of course, who can

HE SUDDENLY SLUNG UP A FAST YORKER

keep his own counsel, and it is a wise bowler who treasures up the crumbs of information which fall from the batsman's mouth.

The following wicked trick was once played by a bowler and his field in collaboration, but it was in a match of no importance, in which the result was a foregone conclusion. The non-striker was short-sighted and impetuous, and to secure his dismissal the bowler, long-stop and wicket-keeper put up the following scheme. The first time the wicket-keeper took a ball, the long-stop was to right about face and run for his life, as if to save imaginary byes. Mr. Non-striker lost sight of the ball, but saw long-stop running like a deer, so assuming that byes were to be had, he was off at once, and when the batsmen had crossed, the wicket was put down, to his great and endless amazement. It was only after the dinner which succeeded the match, and when the port had gone round freely, that the hideous details were revealed to the victim.

My father had rather a good bowler-umpire story. He was the non-striker, and the bowler fired off a really prodigious wide. The umpire made no sign, so my father said to him, 'Wasn't that a wide, umpire?' 'Wide? yes, sir: wide a ball as ever I seed?' but it never got on to the score-sheet.

But of all the wicked 'plants' that were ever put up for the guileless batsman the following is the wickedest. The story is pretty well known, as also the names of the protagonists, but in case there is a reader of the BADMINTON to whom it is not familiar, it must here be recorded. A well-known ex-county batsman had, and has, a trick of knocking the ball away whenever he has played it and has left it within reach; in fact, of hitting it twice without *malice prepense* as far as runs are concerned. Some kind-hearted friends and cricketers promoted the following device. The first time he played the ball close to his feet, and tapped it away, 'point' dashed in, seized the ball, and threw it hard at the wicket, fairly wide, as if the batsman were out of his ground, and the wicket-keeper let it pass. Off went the batsman for the run: 'How's that for hitting the ball twice and running?' The umpire said 'Out!' and the batsman of course had to go.

I should like to argue this point a little, for I am convinced that the umpire—and he was a good umpire, too—was utterly wrong. But be it premised at once that the whole incident was devised in a spirit of jocularity, one friend meaning to get a rise out of the other. Still, as a matter of strict cricket, I wish to maintain that the law which makes the umpires 'the sole judges of fair and unfair play' quite exonerates the batsman from all responsibility, as he was led astray by the action of the fieldsman.

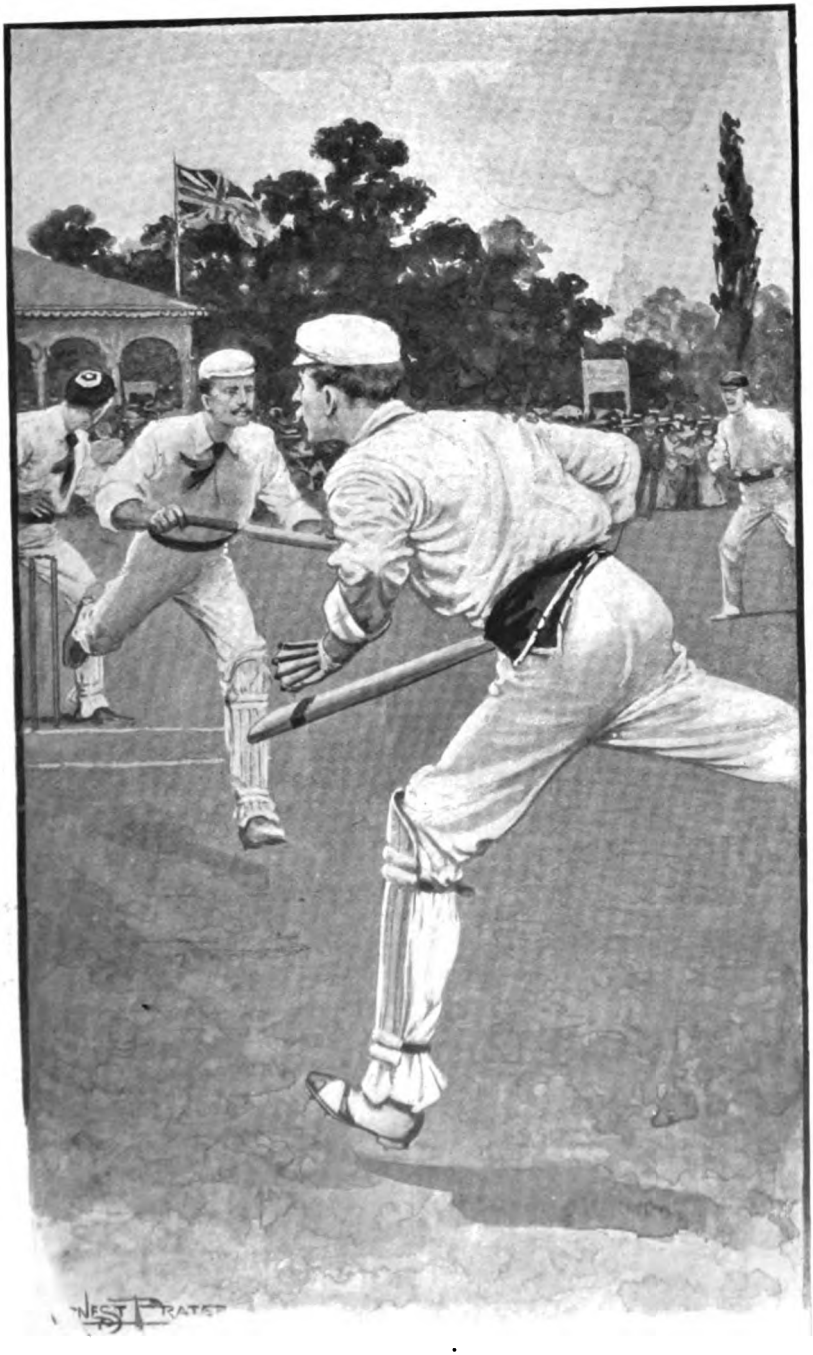
Next you may say, having struck the ball twice, he had no right to run; this, in other words, means that the ball was 'dead' to him for purposes of run-getting, and that, by hitting a 'dead' ball and running, he ran the almost certain risk of being given out on appeal, though had he been out of his ground—as he wasn't—he might have been run out. But, I maintain, the mere act of throwing at the wicket, as performed by the fieldsman, brought the ball to life again—quickened it—and consequently the striker had an undeniable claim to his runs. Finally, if the ball had gone to the boundary, what was the right thing for the umpire to do? He must either give four runs, or give the batsman out for having, constructively, struck the ball twice and then run four. Will some one who is versed in cricket jurisprudence find a fallacy—no doubt there is a fallacy—in these arguments?

Another little fielding story will bear repetition. I cannot quite reproduce names, though the heroes were both first-class cricketers, one being the finest, or nearly the finest, fieldsman in England. The other did not agree with public opinion; remarked that X. was the most over-rated field in England, and that he intended to run whenever the ball went to him. Y. was told of this, and was on his mettle. X. made his stroke, and called his partner; Y. smiled a smile of satisfaction, and threw down the wicket from cover-point before the batsmen had crossed. So it was X. and not his partner who was out. What he had to say about Y.'s fielding after the occurrence is an unwritten page of history.

One of the most extraordinary catches I ever saw was made at mid-off by a man who did not pretend to be a cricketer, and only came out to field as a substitute. A catch—quite a hot catch—came to him at mid-off, just over his left shoulder, and he caught it with his right hand—back-handed, so to speak.

I am sure E. H. Buckland won't mind my telling a story against him. He was fielding short-slip to a left-handed bowler, an ex-Cantab, and very slow. The batsman hit at the ball back-handed, and missed his first shot. Next over the batsman framed for the same stroke. Short-slip faced about, and assumed the position of him who would give 'a back' at leap-frog. But the batsman's aim was too true; he smote the ball, and the ball smote poor E. H. B., knocking him over, to the intense joy of the surrounding rustics.

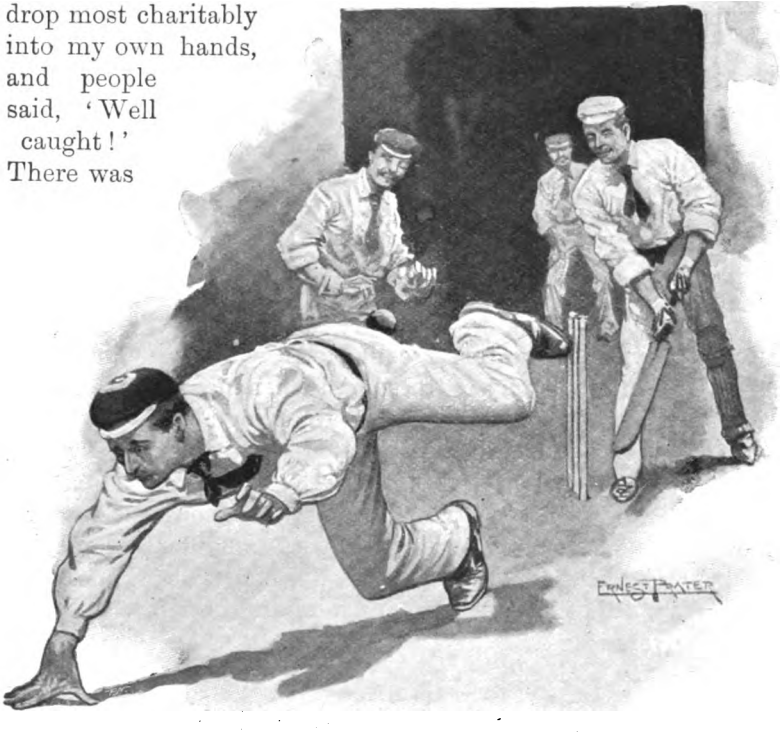
Any cricketer could write an account of sensational catches by the score, and could have a word to say about misses; but I once saw three catches missed at point off consecutive balls! If anyone doubts this, and will secure me against the misser's



HE WAS OFF AT ONCE

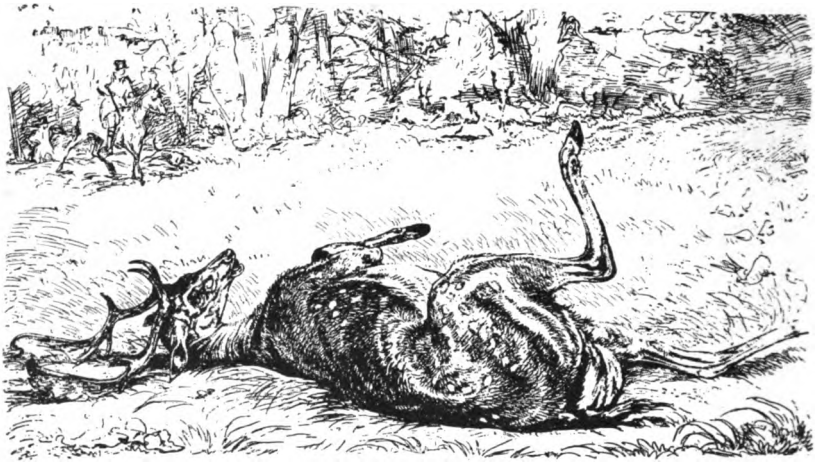
vengeance, I might be persuaded to give his name; otherwise the proverbial wild horses will not extract it.

Would it be presumptuous in me to offer a word of advice to cricketers who read the BADMINTON on the subject of a particular sort of catch? I mean the catch which is hit high but not far over one's head. Most men run in the direction of the ball's course, and that is all right; but they don't hold out their arms on the *chance* of the ball falling into their hands. Yet I recall two occasions when the ball did drop most charitably into my own hands, and people said, 'Well caught!' There was



KNOCKING HIM OVER

no catching, pure and simple, to be done; but there *was* a chance of the ball dropping kindly into the right place, even though it came over one's head. In one case the catch seemed so ridiculous, or such a fluke, that the bowler, an unregenerate brother, instead of being grateful, sat down and laughed. But the 'tip' is really a good one, even if it only comes off twice in a lifetime.



A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS

BY ANTHONY GIBBS

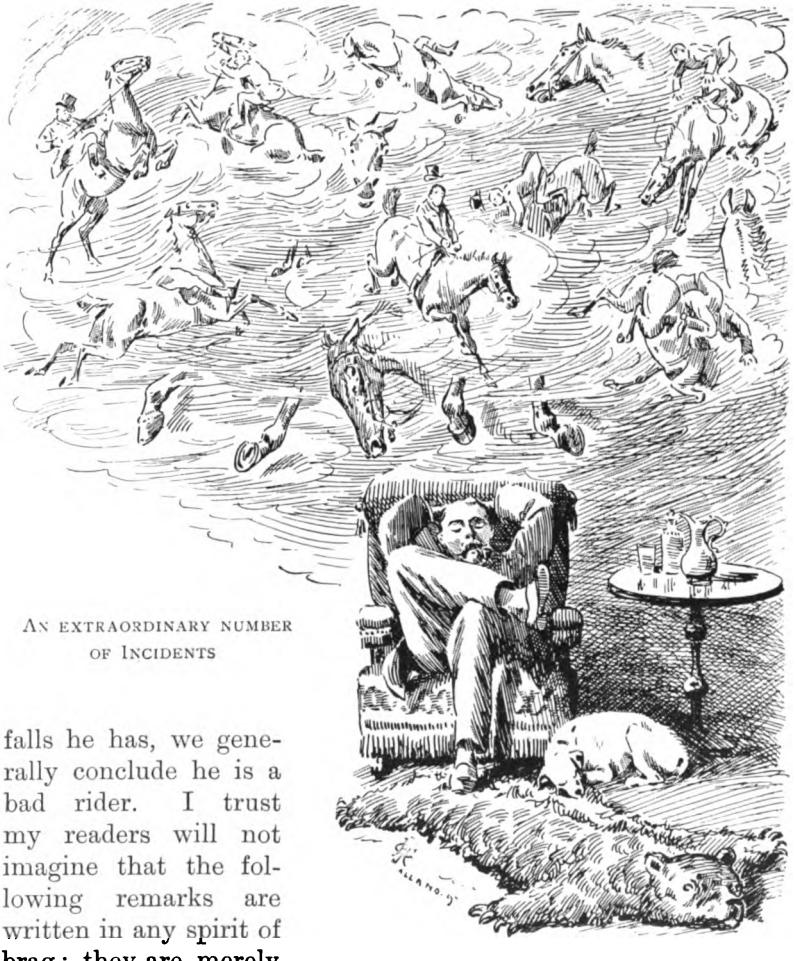
AMONG the various hunting recollections which remain vividly impressed on the memory of the sportsman, none are more readily called up than those connected with 'tumbling about.'

Unless you have been the fortunate possessor of a very large stud, there is no difficulty in remembering every horse you ever owned, and it is then but a short step onwards to retrace most of the occasions on which either you or your gallant steed made a mistake, and you were down with a stunning fall. Perhaps in the writer's case there is less difficulty in summoning up old hunting adventures than the more fortunate possessors of large studs might find; for in his somewhat brief experience of barely twenty years, dating back to the time when at the age of nine he used to tumble off his pony pretty regularly, he can claim to having possessed comparatively few hunters, although these have all been good ones.

It is wonderful how much sport a light-weight can see in the course of a season with a stud of even two sound seasoned hunters. With ordinary luck he should get from forty to fifty days out of them in each year, and this is really a very fair allowance for those who hunt for amusement, and not as a business.

There is nothing so instructive as looking back over a series of years, whether it be in connection with hunting or any other

pursuit. The lessons which experience teaches are useful in all relations of life, but especially in the hunting field. The good man to hounds after the age of thirty has but a small average of falls, because he is able to profit by the experience of earlier days. When one hears a fellow boasting about the great number of



AN EXTRAORDINARY NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

falls he has, we generally conclude he is a bad rider. I trust my readers will not imagine that the following remarks are written in any spirit of brag; they are merely set down in the hope that, should they catch the eye of any young and ardent sportsman just going up to Oxford, they may be of use in saving him a few falls in the hunting field.

Sitting over the fire in a snug smoking-room the other night, two or three of us set ourselves to count up all the falls (voluntary and involuntary) we could remember having taken at any time

in our lives. Some of the scores, extending over a period of twenty years, naturally amounted to well over the hundred. A young man will be lucky if he only averages five falls a season from the time of going to Eton up to the age of thirty. Assheton Smith is said to have had as many as sixty or seventy in the course of one year!

It may seem impossible on first thoughts for the human memory to retain such apparently trivial events as ordinary hunting falls for any length of time, but anyone who will write down every horse he ever owned, and will carry his memory back to the different seasons he rode them, will find he is able to recollect an extraordinary number of incidents connected with them which he imagined he had forgotten all about. The fact is falls are generally impressed on the memory by their great variety. No two falls are quite the same.

Here is a short table of the different falls the writer can recall as having occurred in the last twelve years, some of which were undoubtedly due to the rashness and inexperience of youth:—

Small blind fences	18
Horse refusing and getting into ditch towards you	6
Brooks	9
Dropping hind legs in wide ditch	5
Rotten banks giving way	5
Blown horses	4
Falls on the flat	5
Timber	4
'Voluntaries'	6
Landing well over fence but into boggy ground	4
Horse getting out of hand and going for impossible places	3
Knocked off by trees	3
Aylesbury Doubles	2
Warwickshire stake and bound fences	2
Gloucestershire walls (in five seasons)	2
Charging impossibilities	4
Pulled off by thick fences	3
Jumping into pond	1
Collisions	1
Dragged off by a gate	1
Total	88

There are a good many other ways in which one can take falls out hunting besides the twenty enumerated above.

A horse's legs may give at a deep drop, or he may fall down

with you on the road while galloping along after hounds, or slip up sideways, or he may fall over wire of all descriptions, or you may be knocked off your horse by an old woman's clothes-line.

Each different sort of fall teaches us something, and this is our object in enumerating them. First and foremost with regard to small blind fences; these are not only the most frequent source

CHOOSE HIS OWN LINE

of grief to horse and rider, but they are the most dangerous a man can have when going fast. They are very similar to falls on the flat. As a rule, the horse tries to gallop through them instead of jumping; young horses through ignorance, old horses through carelessness or through thinking they 'know too much.'

On most of the occasions you experience this sort of fall, ten to one you are riding hirelings, or old horses—stale on their legs.

Young riders should learn to choose their own place in a fence, and if it is necessary to jump a small blind place, it should be taken at a slow pace. When going slow a horse is more likely to look where he is going, and if he *does* put his legs into the ditch he will generally get over all right with a scramble.

In a few of the best countries it may not be advisable for an inexperienced man to take his own place in a fence, owing to the prevalence of barbed wire; but except in certain districts noted for wire, I know of no grass country in which I would not advise a young and keen rider to habitually choose his own line after November 1. By doing so he will probably avoid being jumped on, or, worse still, jumping on other people, and he will very soon get sufficient experience to know what is jumpable and what should be avoided. The only way to become a good man, both as regards hounds and riding over a country, is to be totally independent of other people. It is the most ridiculous spectacle in the world to watch a whole string of horsemen galloping after each other in the direction in which the hounds were running *five minutes before they turned sharp back.* Yet this is what is constantly happening, owing to the foolish habit of following *men* instead of *hounds.*

And now as to the causes of other sorts of tumbles, and how to avoid them. Everybody knows that in order to cover a wide brook a good deal of pace is required. But it is only in the last few strides that a horse should be bustled for a wide place, and as a general rule all sorts of fences except wide brooks should be taken at a moderate pace. A good horse will spread himself over a very wide ditch without going over-fast at it.

Indecision in horse or rider is usually the cause of falling at brooks and wide ditches. A crowd of refusing 'riders' in front will put the best of horses off.

Ride your own line, and you will be spared taking part in the humiliating scenes which invariably occur when a piece of water of the smallest dimensions is encountered in the course of a run.

Even should you come down to a very wide place, you will probably get over with a scramble or possibly a fall. And there is no easier tumble than that which occurs at a wide brook, as long as you don't 'funk,' and the horse does his best. Should he stop short at the last moment, and plunge 'in medias res,' you will probably have only yourself to blame; it is wonderful how the rider's indecision is communicated to the horse on these occasions.

Before going to a public school a boy should have learnt how

to tumble off his pony with the least amount of inconvenience to himself. Boys never hurt themselves, and fortunate are those who have the chance of learning to fall early in life; if they don't learn it then they never will afterwards; and it is to the fact that his pony never would rise at a fence, and seemed to love falling as much as some horses love jumping, that the writer attributes his extraordinary immunity from bad accidents in after life.

After going to Eton the pony is probably despised as a conveyance across country. It was during my first Christmas holidays from that seat of learning that, mounted on a thoroughbred screw, I learnt the useful lesson of riding slowly at timber, a crushing fall over a stile having been the very effectual means of instruction.

Then came the first fall on the flat, sharp and sudden, the most dangerous sort you can have when going at full speed. This taught me to keep a sharp look-out for rabbit-holes, cart-tracks, and grips, when riding to hounds. You can go at a fair pace over a field full of grips if you take them obliquely and in the same sort of slanting way that you gallop across ridge and furrow.

Talking of grips, I shall never forget seeing two valuable horses lying dead, side by side, at a grip not two feet wide. It was on the occasion of the Midlands Sportsmen's Races, held near Banbury in 1888. Having taken a fall, I was rather behindhand, and immediately after jumping a fence, came upon Mr. Chinnery and Mr. Cecil Boyle standing over their gallant steeds, both of which had broken their backs at this tiny drain. The value of these two horses could not have been less than a thousand pounds between them. How anyone in his senses could have chosen a steeplechase course with this trap in it—a narrow drain set about twenty yards in front of a big fence—has always been a mystery. The race in question, in which thirty-six started, was won by Gordon Cunard. Poor 'Bay' Middleton was second. Jack Martin, king of riders, won the light-weight race on The Captain.

The next lesson I learnt was to make sure before starting off hunting that the bridle is in proper order, and that there is no rotten leather about. It came about in this way. While hunting with Mr. R. Combe's hounds, near Aldershot, on the last day he ever took them out, my mount (the same thoroughbred screw that gave me the fall over timber) fell at a small fence, but got up very quickly and galloped on. Hounds were running well at the time. I was thrown on to the animal's head, but by dint of 'hanging on by his ears' I managed by an unfortunate coincidence

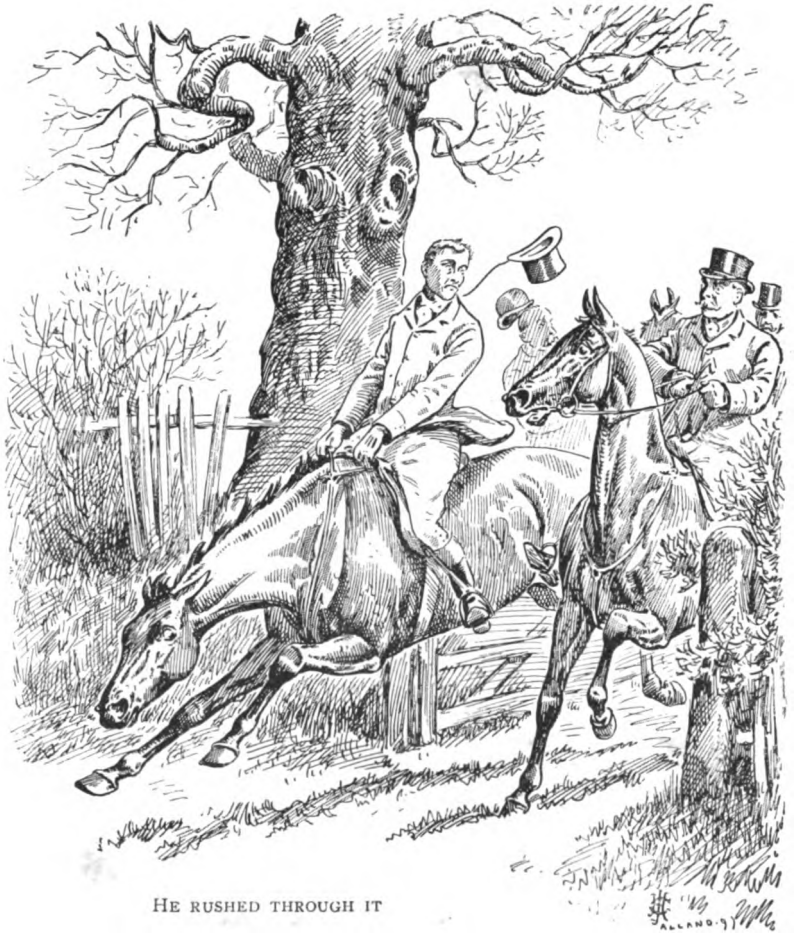
to get back into the saddle without parting company. To my surprise and disgust, by the time the horse had got into a fast gallop, I discovered that curb and snaffle, instead of being in the animal's mouth, were dangling loosely round its neck. In the fall the bridle had been scraped over the horse's ears, and, to crown all, the throatlash had broken. The horse was the first to realise that he was, for once in a way, master of the situation, and the consequence was he simply bolted. When he found himself free of the bridle, he put his head down close to the ground, stretched out his neck, and galloped like mad. He was a very fast horse at any time, but on this occasion he went like the wind. There was never the remotest chance of jumping off at the pace we were going. For the first half-mile down the road was the order of the day, but seeing two or three men taking their turn at a gateway he rushed through it in the most alarming fashion, and then it was 'forrard away' over this beastly country, which bristles with wire, and is perfectly unrideable at any time. In the meantime, the hounds had long ago been passed, and most of the field were pursuing *us*; this, of course, frightened the wretched brute still more, and he went on in his mad career at the pace of an express train. John Gilpin wasn't in it. Fortunately for a few hundred yards no obstacles of any importance had to be jumped, and I had time to look about me, and think what could be done. It is useless to take off your coat and try to put it over your mount's eyes on these occasions, for you will never reach his head. No, the only thing to be done is to sit still, and look out for a chance of jumping off. But soon in the distance looms a high wire fence—six feet high it must be! What is to be done now?

The mad brute is galloping straight towards it, and does not appear to see it. When within fifty yards I made preparations to spring off. But, to my intense satisfaction, he would not face these rails, and stopped dead, allowing his rider to dismount, none the worse for the most exciting ride he ever had in his life.

It is, of course, at least a hundred to one chance in favour of the rider, that when the bridle comes off you are able to *get off* before the horse discovers the fact, even if you are not thrown off in the fall. Should any readers, however, find themselves in a like predicament, I can only implore them to throw themselves off at the first opportunity.

Another fall, connected with the bridle being out of order, occurred to the writer a few years ago. On this occasion the lip-strap broke, the horse pulled the cheek of the curb into his mouth,

and got out of hand. Hounds were running hard, and straight in front of us was stretched a high and strong fence into a grass lane, a line of trees with low hanging boughs rendering it impossible for a horse with a man on him to get safely over. When within a hundred yards of this fence, and with my eyes fixed on it on the look-out for a possible place, I suddenly became aware



HE RUSHED THROUGH IT

that I could not stop my horse, and before I could make up my mind to throw myself off he was right up to it. A crashing of timber, a sensation of flying through the air, and I found myself reclining in the lane beyond, ten yards away from the fence, with my face towards it, while the horse was lying in the ditch the other side of the lane, quite twenty yards from where he must have landed.

How we got there, and why neither of us was hurt, it is impossible to determine: for it did not appear possible that any horse with a man on him could have squeezed under the low hanging boughs which ran all along the hedge.

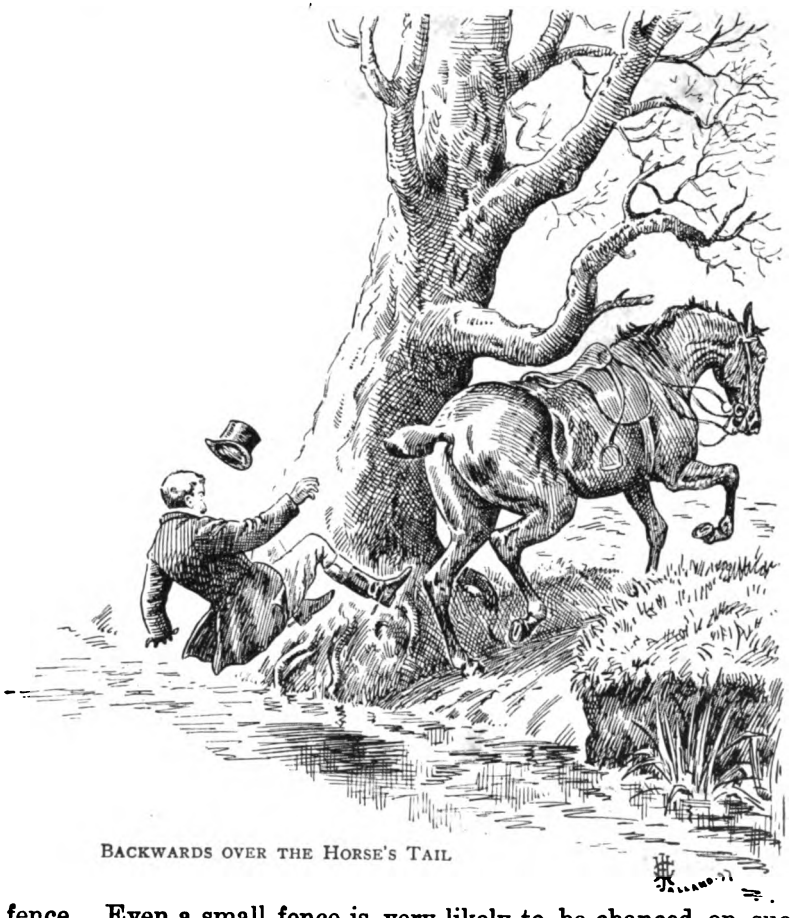
On another occasion when I was knocked off by a tree, I came off backwards over the horse's tail, and landed in a sitting posture in the middle of a small but deep brook, much to the amusement of the Bicester field.

The Oxford undergraduate during his first two seasons with the many good packs around, probably gets more falls than he will in ten years' hunting after he has left the University. There is no period in life when a man's nerve is better, no time when valour is less tempered by discretion, and when more impossible fences are attempted in the chance of getting over somehow or other with a fall. Let us put the clock back ten years, and live again those glorious days when, accompanied by a score or so of the best fellows in the world, as the hunting undergraduates for the most part are, you did your best to ride over the famous Bicester bitches, and break your own neck into the bargain. You were lucky enough to have two horses 'up,' and were not satisfied unless you got two days a week out of each. Will you ever forget the first day from Chilton, when a fox went away from 'Chearsley Spinney,' and you got in the brook the very first fence of the day? Your own fault, too; for in your ignorance you tried to jump it standing when there was no hedge in front of it, instead of following in the wake of Gerald Pratt and the noble Master, who sailed down to the place where the low trim fence guarded the gleaming water from their horses' eyes, and flitted over like birds on the wing. You learnt how and where to ride at a brook on this day, which was more than you would have learnt if you had stayed in Oxford and attended lectures. You had two falls that day, if I remember right, for in the evening you rode a tired Oxford hireling, and as good a one as ever stepped, at a great high straggling fence, the other side of which was the Wootton tram-line, which, of course, you did not know of.

Then there was the day when you rode your poor old chestnut horse as fast as he could gallop up a steep hill by Arncott Wood, and thinking to secure a good start, but forgetting that he was blown, you put him at a high fence with a big ditch and drop beyond, instead of waiting your turn at the gate. The result was that he dropped his hind legs and lay for dead, while the chase dashed on, and you were left with one Good Samaritan, wondering where you could get a gun. And then, when he got up and shook

himself, and you found his back was not broken, and that he was only a bit blown, you had the impudence to go and finish the run, which lasted a good hour, and you had the cheek to say afterwards that you were never better carried in your life!

There is no worse judgment than is evinced by the man who gallops his horse up a steep place, and then rides him at a stiff



BACKWARDS OVER THE HORSE'S TAIL

fence. Even a small fence is very likely to be chanced on such occasions. *Experientia docet.*

And what did you mean by going out with the Bicester in such abominable ill-fitting leathers and 'anti-gropolos' boots as you wore your first term at Oxford? You know they were an old pair of your father's (or was it grandfather's?) and were long out of date, and yet, when you were asked by your friends where you got them, you merely replied, 'Oh, these are last year's

boots!' The fact was, you wanted to make a great show in your red coat, and were too ignorant to realise that decent mufti is ever so much smarter than 'smug' pink.

It served you right, when you did get a new outfit, that in the excitement of a fast burst over the grass you mistook a place where the cattle had trodden down the bank of the river Cherwell for a ford, and jumping in, went right under, horse and all, though it was a bit hard, the hounds never running 'a yard' after they had crossed, and after you had scrambled out on the other side, with your mouth full of muddy water and your new pink coat spoilt, all to no purpose. And it was harder still to be told by your Oxford friends, who, to tell the truth, did not arrive on the scene till after the huntsman had blown his horn and called his hounds back, that neither fox nor hounds had ever crossed the river!

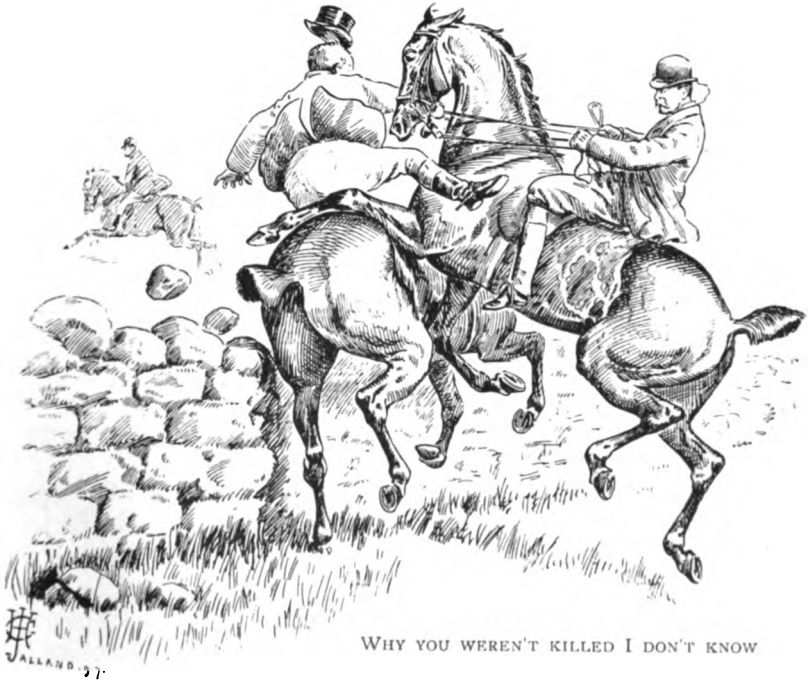
Then there was the day you rode your chestnut horse, 'to sell' with the Warwickshire, and after riding him in one good run over the Oxhill Vale, and being carried much better than you ever deserved, you must needs start in a second run with a tired horse, with the result that you took three falls and got in the brook twice. One fence you had pointed out to you, as you stood at the covert side as being boggy on the landing side and a 'certain fall,' and yet when hounds find, you see a couple of men jumping it fifty yards higher up, and so you must have a dash, and, of course, you come down a cropper, having picked the very place you were told to avoid.

But since leaving Oxford you must confess you have done one or two stupid things. For instance, when you rode at a wall a few yards to the left of a gap, at which another man was in the act of putting a pulling horse. Your horse swerved towards the gap, and ran down the wall, just as your friend on the right was rising to the leap. The first thing you realised was that his horse's forelegs had knocked you over the wall; the next, that he had knocked your horse over the wall sideways, nearly on top of you, and the next that you were all four, two horses and two men, rolling about on the ground together, in a heap. Why you weren't killed I don't know, but the fact remains that nobody was hurt, and that you both remounted and rode away as if nothing had happened. If this should meet the eye of anyone who hunts in a wall country, let me beseech him never on any account to attempt to jump a wall close to a gap which somebody else is going for.

You have doubtless not forgotten the day you got left in a thick bull-finch, and had to be pushed out from behind; at the

end of which process you could see your mount taking his fences gallantly down in the vale a mile ahead. Nor will that six-mile walk in topboots and breeches escape your memory. In opening an awkward gate on to the road whilst returning from hunting, you got knocked off and left sitting on the gate, while your mount quietly trotted off to Brackley, six miles away, where he knew a comfortable stable awaited him.

You have jumped fences with wire hidden in them and you have landed over a deep drop into a pond, and on another occasion you alighted on the edge of a small gravel pit; in fact, you have



WHY YOU WEREN'T KILLED I DON'T KNOW

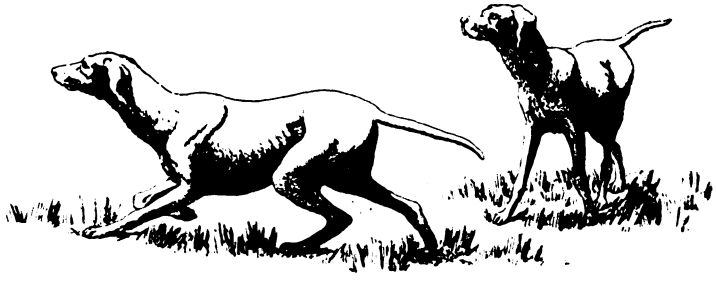
tempted Providence sufficiently, and have done pretty well everything which it is possible to do, except damage yourself or your horse. My advice, then, for the future is simply 'be careful.'

As a matter of fact, the very next time hounds settle down to run over the Vale, all the good resolutions we form while sitting at home in our smoking-room are thrown to the winds. But one cannot go through the varied experiences which everyone meets in a greater or less degree in the course of a few seasons' hunting without profiting to a considerable extent. So that as time goes on, the risks to be met with while riding straight across

country become greatly minimised, and after a time one may feel as secure on the back of a good hunter as one does while sitting at home in an armchair. Horses are so much cleverer than their riders. They have the wonderful gift of instinct so much more strongly developed. Only last Spring I had cause to bless that mysterious sense of danger with which some horses more than others seem to be endowed. Riding a rushing but marvellously clever old hunter up a steep bank to jump a low wall, beyond which hounds were running in a grass field, I was surprised by an abrupt refusal at the very point of taking off. I could see nothing wrong, so stood up in my stirrups and peeped over. As I did so, my 'flesh crept.' For on the other side was a sheer drop of nearly twenty feet into a hard, stony lane. No man or horse could possibly have taken the leap without a crushing fall. The noble animal could not have seen over the wall any more than his rider; he must have smelt danger, however, for *he had never refused before*! So unnerved were horse and rider by this event, that at the next fence the horse got out of hand, and instead of jumping a low, easy place, he rushed at an impossible one, refused, and fell into the ditch on the take-off side.

In conclusion, if I have shown that a young rider, whether through ignorance or folly (as is generally the case), or through 'the chances of war,' can experience a large number of falls without damaging himself or his gallant steed, it has not, I trust, been recorded with any spirit of boastfulness and pride. Heaven forbid! I have rather endeavoured to show forth the wonderful care with which Providence guards us in all our paths through life, in a spirit of gratitude for immunity from accident, and in the hope that those of my readers who are in the spring-tide of their days may gain some small profit in saving themselves from those falls in the hunting field which result from inexperience or from the recklessness of early youth.

The question of 'how to fall' is, after all, one on which no man can give much advice. 'Keep your head' and 'stick to the reins' are, of course, the two cardinal rules. As long as a man's seat is firm enough to be totally independent of the reins, he should not sit with too tight a grip when jumping stiff timber. There is no doubt that the looser your grip in riding over stiff fences the more likely you are to be thrown clear in a fall. For this reason, I have sometimes been thankful that I have not been endowed with the power of sitting very tight, nor do I remember ever having a horse on top of me, save on one occasion only, and then it was somebody else's!



POLO ON THE PAMPAS

BY ANN SCOTT-MONCRIEFF

At Hurlingham, Ranelagh, and in Paris, the Argentine team, with their sturdy little ponies, have within recent years made themselves known to European players as formidable rivals, and have given a good impression of the training they have received at the younger Hurlingham—the favourite haunt of Englishmen in Buenos Ayres.

This article does not describe the play of these picked men and picked ponies, or the well-kept turf and fashionable gatherings found at the clubs in and around the capital of Argentina, but would give an idea of polo as it is played in the far distant pampas, wherever a dozen or so Englishmen are found within convenient riding distance of each other.

Polo is fast becoming the most popular game in the country, and it is not to be wondered at, for no country is better adapted to the game. It is easy anywhere on the level plain, covered with short grass, to make a ground: a little trimming of rough places, cutting down of tufts of grass, a *corrál* inclosed, a well dug, and all is ready. Ponies of the right height are got without much difficulty, and with still less difficulty are kept. The *criollo* horse is, indeed, a wonderful little beast; living in the open, fed on the natural grass of the pampas, he is sound and tough. If he has not been spoilt by the careless breaking-in of the Gaucho, he requires only a little grooming and a little extra feeding on maize or oats to turn him out a capital mount. It is extraordinary how quickly he learns what is expected of him, and picks up the way of the game. Of course, only one in a

hundred, say, becomes a really valuable polo pony, but an average mount is easily to be found.

The beauty of the climate also favours all outdoor games; rain and dust storms alone drive one to take shelter under a roof, and they pass away as quickly as they come. Even in the great heat of the three summer months, out in the pampas the weather is never enervating, and a camp man is ready for a game all the year round; therefore he is always in practice.

GAUCHO AND CRIOLLO HORSE

But in camp, as all outside the streets of Buenos Ayres is called (from the Spanish *campo*, country), Sunday is generally devoted to polo. Sunday on an estancia is in reality, as well as in name, the day of rest.

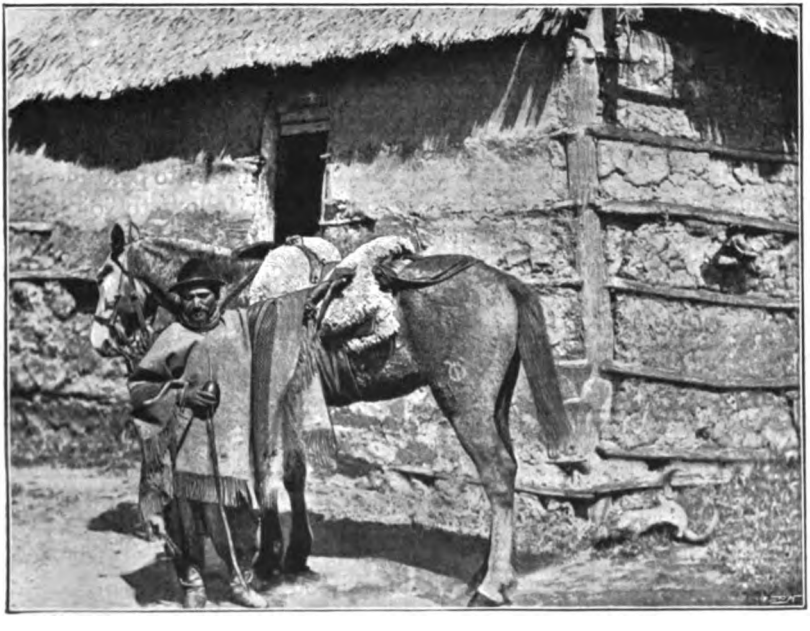
After a week of hard and unceasing labour from sunrise to sunset, what is more delightful than to lie in bed, knowing that until you break the spell yourself, no one will disturb your idleness?

The sun rises high, forcing himself upon your notice, yet you take no heed of him; the fowls with exultant cluck invade the

deserted *corredores*, unchecked by the housemaid, who gossips with the cook or some other idler.

The murmur of their voices, and the whiff of the cook's cigarette smoke, alone are pleasing signs of leisure. He knows it is useless to bestir himself till *el patron*, hunger getting the better of sleep, shouts across the *patio* an order to bring tea and biscuits. Breakfast proper is a substantial meal served at noon.

Special attention is paid to the toilet on Sunday morning, and, with the prospect of polo and society, all turn out in their



A GAUCHO GOSSIP REFRESHES HIMSELF

best—polo breeches and shirts, top-boots (highly polished in honour of the day), broad leather belts, a bright-coloured tie, and a *sombrero* making a picturesque and becoming though decidedly unsabbatical costume.

Sometimes it happens a guest may arrive skilled in the use of the scissors; then, on Saturday night, one by one his appreciative friends seat themselves in a chair placed in the *patio* and allow him to shear their flowing locks. Around are gathered critics who discuss the style of his cut, and generally succeed in sending the subject away with a humble opinion of his own personality.

There is a pleasant air of quiet and leisure about the whole place on this day of rest from labour. The *peones* ride off to visit friends, or, more generally, to the nearest *pulperia*, where the wily storekeeper knows it is to his advantage to encourage his customers to hang round all day, by having races between well-known riders of the neighbourhood, or by raffling a horse, or any other form of pleasing excitement.

The *pulperia* is the centre of all gossip as well as business; it is the bank, drinking bar, post office, and general store. Looking at it, standing solitary in the empty camp, the centre of many diverging tracks, the reason for its being known as *la esquina* (the corner) is not apparent, till the stir of business, the flow of gossip, and the slouching figures round the door, recall a similar scene to be met with at the corner of every village street where the shop of the place is usually situated.

Mothers shocked at the idea of devoting Sunday to polo should remember what a temptation it is to a young fellow to join the loafers round the store, watching their games and races, and perhaps taking part in them, at the risk of being brought into contact with very doubtful characters, and perhaps mixed up in more or less disreputable scenes. The temptation is very real to a solitary young fellow who may have had no one to speak to during the week.

When there is no Sunday service to go to, no piano or books to enjoy, and, owing to the long distances, little social intercourse, it is only too easy for a lad to fall into bad ways. Surely in these circumstances Sunday polo is not to be discouraged.

The polo ground is usually to be found at the estancia of greatest importance in the neighbourhood—the most *civilised* in camp parlance—where it is possible to put up all the members of the club coming from a distance, and where ladies' society and a piano make it more worth a twenty miles' ride for a game.

Let me describe the meeting of one of these clubs on a Sunday afternoon, from the point of view of spectator and timekeeper seated in the saddle in place of the grand stand.

The ground lies a mile or so from the house. The posts of the *corrál* and the cross-beams above the well hardly catch the eye, so insignificant are they on the vast green level; the low buildings of the estancia, and the avenues of poplar leading to the house, alone break the circle of the horizon. Above is a dome of brightest blue flecked with white clouds—the people of Argentina say that their flag bears the colours of this lovely sky, the greatest beauty of their bare land.

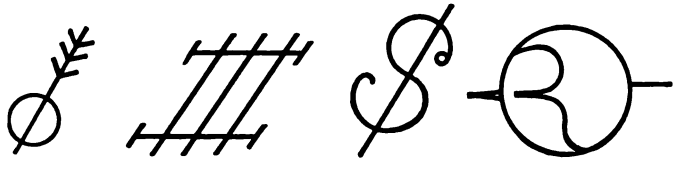
A MOTLEY CREW OF PONIES

The solitude and silence are broken by a stampede of horses as the players arrive from all quarters, each driving his *tropilla* of *petizos*; with many shouts and waving *rehenques* they are gathered into the *corrál*, and the *peones* set to work to saddle up.

A motley crew of ponies they are—piebalds, and every colour and every mixture of colour imaginable, recall the circus more than the polo ground.

Horses are almost invariably named from their colour and markings by the Gauchos, who have a word to express every shade of difference which they detect at a glance. The *hajo-oscuro* is a cloudy yellow; the *azuleto*, 'the bluish one,' is a hideous mixture of grey, brown, and white, really distressing to the eye, yet being quick and handy his colour is forgiven him. *Picaso*, black with white points, *rosillo*, roan, and *zaino*, brown, are all good colours and therefore are common names.

The *criollo* horse is seldom well proportioned, his big head and heavy build making one doubt the truth of the legend that



SEÑALS

his ancestors were Arabs introduced into the New World by the early Arab conquerors. The custom of branding each horse on the haunch with the owner's mark is very disfiguring. But no doubt the use of *guias* and *señals* does much to prevent horse and cattle stealing. Every estancia has its *señal* as well as every individual who possesses enough horses and cattle to make it worth his while. No one can buy an animal without taking out a *guia*, a certificate of sale in which is registered the *señal* or mark already branded on the animal and the mark the new owner will put in its place. Therefore, if a horse has changed hands often he is covered with an arabesque pattern of old marks as well as the distinct brand of his new owner.

A *tropero* travelling with cattle, horses or sheep, is bound to produce *guias* to show what authority he has over them. At most estancias the mark and name of the owner are posted up in some prominent position; both are stamped on letters sent to the post, and on all writing-paper, and even sometimes on the household linen.

A *señal* in Argentina is of more practical use than a crest in Europe. As no two can be the same, the novelty in style and design is very great, the more primitive reminding one of the attempts of a savage people to draw, or of Egyptian hieroglyphics.

But let us return to the players. From each estancia come two or three to half a dozen men. There is the owner, *el patron*, and his *mayor-domo*, and perhaps one or two youngsters who are being trained under them, very much as the squire was trained by the knight in old days.

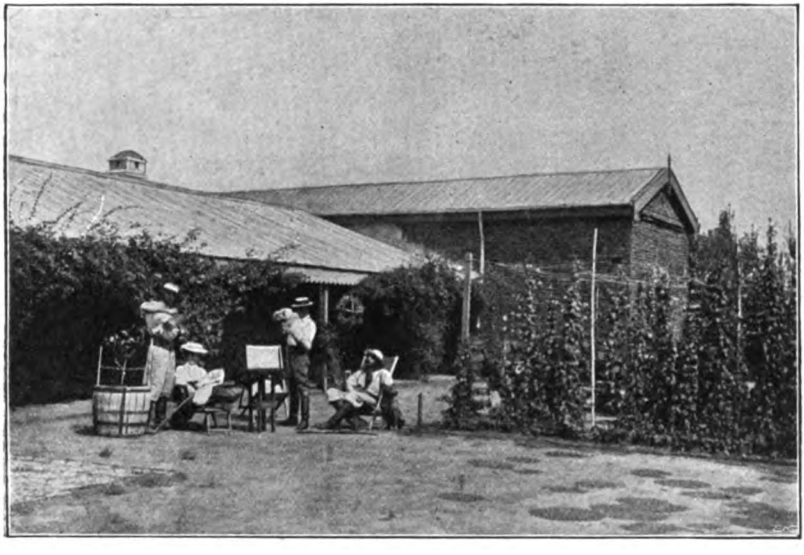
Every man is only too well acquainted with his neighbour's weak points as well as his strong; this makes it somewhat difficult to form good sides and content all. The young fellows have also to be disposed of; they are generally learning to ride as well as play polo, and are apt to be somewhat dangerous elements in the game. Yet for the good of the community these new chums must be turned into useful members of the club as soon as possible, and for their own good they have been probably ordered on to the field by *el patron* in place of loafing the afternoon away.

If a lad has had some riding in the hunting field at home, he has probably learnt to handle a horse and stick on a saddle; but too often he has much to unlearn as well as learn before he becomes a good rough-rider up to the Gaucho standard. The new chum whose only idea of a horse is that it is useful for pulling a cab has a bad time of it, and finds the polo ground a hard riding school, where little mercy is shown to the incapable. With elbows out, legs like wooden pins, rolling in his saddle, unable to control his horse, he is to be seen charging down the field to the wrath of the players. In great contrast to him is the Gaucho member of the club. In this case he is the *capataz* of the *peones*, a head man on the estancia. He is a huge burly fellow, with a swarthy face and fierce moustache, which, with a red handkerchief tied round his head, give him the appearance of a Turk. His stiff gait and bandy legs—he has lived on horseback since his childhood, and never walked a mile in his life, if as far—make him appear a clumsy fellow on foot, but he is all right when seated on his *recáo*.

He wears a coarse checked shirt, with a black silk handkerchief knotted round his throat; this is a mark of full dress. A broad leather belt round his waist is covered with silver coins, and in it is stuck a wicked-looking Spanish knife, which in all probability has killed its man. His *recáo* is made of various bits of hide, a rug or two, and a sheepskin, held in place by a slight frame of wood, the whole bound round the horse with a broad girth of

raw hide. His stirrups are rings cut out of horn, on which he rests his great toe; a hole is cut in the point of his *alpargatas* (cloth shoes) to allow him to do so. He uses a single rein and powerful bit, with which he can instantly stop his horse, but his rein lies loose, he guides with a touch on the neck; indeed, watching him in the heat of the game, it seems as if bit and bridle were unnecessary, the horse and man being one in any movement.

The Gaucho rides by balance, and balance alone; he scoffs at the cowboy wedged in a Mexican saddle as if seated in a high-backed chair. Perhaps his most astonishing feat is his trick of always landing on his feet, however his horse comes down.



AFTER A HARD GAME

Once the writer stood at the door of a *rancho* chatting with a native woman, while watching some men working cattle at a distance. One rider came towards them at full gallop; as he reached them, his horse put its foot in a hole, and came down in a confusion of dust and flying limbs.

'Por Dios!' screamed the woman springing forwards. I followed, but only to see Don Ignacio standing bridle in one hand, his sombrero in the other, saying with a courteous bow:

'Buenas tardes, señoras!'

To such a rider polo is child's play, yet a Gaucho seldom makes a thoroughly efficient player. He cannot grasp the full value of

rules, and in the excitement of a fast quarter-mile will simply set them at naught.

Pedro, Juan, and José, squatting on their heels, cigarettes between their lips, watch him with delight, yet they are not inspired to play. They are no cowards, but, curiously enough, consider polo a most dangerous game, and think it folly to risk a bad fall for amusement.

The play on the rough ground, the ball often hidden by clouds of dust, is rather different from what one sees on the velvety turf at Hurlingham, where the ball runs to and fro almost as easily as the ivory on the green cloth. But the camp man *can* ride, and he can strike true and hard. If by good chance eight first-rate players have been got together, the game is fast and fiercely contested, and well worth watching.

The play goes on till sunset, then the *petizos* are let free, and each *tropilla* gathering round its bell-mare makes tracks for home, or is driven up to the estancia where its owner intends to spend the night, and where all gather round the tea-table and great pots of tea are emptied and the result of the game is discussed. Then comes a delightful gallop home, eight or nine miles without drawing rein; the horses, keen for their evening feed, require no urging. It is the pleasantest hour of the day, for the wind has dropped and the dazzling light of noon is now softened to the warm glow of sunset, and the sweet dry air has become refreshingly cool; or if it is winter a touch of frost makes it as exhilarating as a glass of champagne. But it is not always such easy going. The writer remembers one intensely hot afternoon, when, as the sun dropped, red and angry, below the line of the horizon, a black cloud rose in the south. A somewhat languid game had come to an end; men and horses were alike irritable and impatient. 'There is a terrible storm brewing,' said our hostess, knowing from a thorough experience of both what such signs portend. She pressed the whole party to come up to the house, and if necessary remain there till the morning, but *el patron* firmly declared that all must go home, as there was special work to be done next morning by sunrise.

'What matter if we are caught in the storm? A wetting won't hurt us!'

We mounted hurriedly, and followed our leader across camp at full speed. Suddenly we seemed to ride into darkness; cold air struck our faces, telling of rain behind it; the roar of the approaching storm came nearer and nearer, till, falling on us with terrible force, horses and riders were overwhelmed in a whirl of

dust, wind, and rain. In the noise and darkness it was impossible to see or hear: one could only trust to the horses. Hanging their heads in *criollo* fashion, they smelt or spied out the road, even carrying us over, without a fall, a bit to be avoided in daylight from being riddled and undermined by the burrowing *viscacho*.

So on and on we struggled in the darkness, fighting each step with the wind. One furious blast lifted me from the saddle; the *zaino viejo* staggered and stumbled, but we recovered ourselves. This was the last of the *pompero*. It swept on, and the rain fell in a deluge behind it. Now I could hear voices and warning

PEDRO, JOSÉ, AND JUAN PASS A PLEASANT EVENING

cries, and felt the *zaino* was shouldering his way through the gateway past the other horses, all eager to get in. In another minute I was lifted from the saddle by strong hands, and hurried into the welcome refuge of the house.

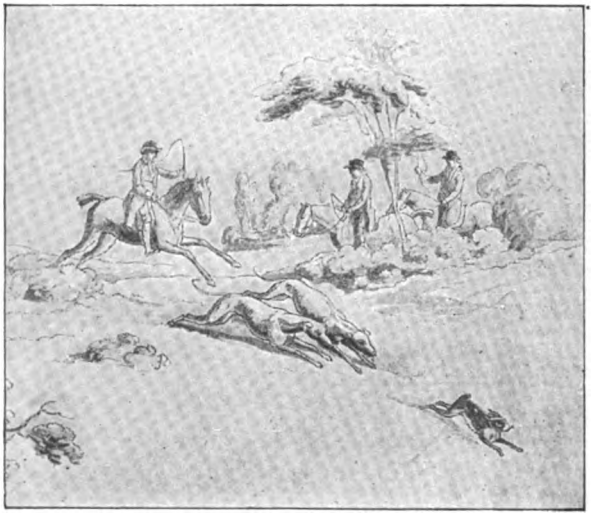
Later comes the always enjoyable hour of *dolce far niente* round the blazing logs, each seated in a rocking chair, veiled in fragrant smoke. The battle is now fought over again, praise is meted out to the good men and the good horses, and much chaff is bestowed on the new chum and his performances on the field. But the laughter dies away and the voices are silent under the charm of familiar tunes played by the lady of the house in the

adjoining *sala*, and each one's thoughts are turned to *home*. Logs burn low and pipes go out, heads begin to nod, and *el patron* rises with a shout and orders all to bed, adding a warning to be up and out by the *madrugada*.

We pause as we pass along the *corredor*, and look out over the camp, gleaming and wet after the rain, stretched as far as eye can see as flat as the ocean in calm weather, and lit up by a moon sailing through a clear sky.

The thrilling notes of a guitar, a snatch of light-hearted Spanish song, float on the air.

Pedro, José, and Juan are also enjoying the hour of relaxation. But their fire also is burning low, and, as their cigarettes go out, one by one they roll themselves in *ponchos*, and with a *recdo* for pillow and bed, a starry sky for roof, soon drop asleep. Silence broods over the estancia till the first grey light of dawn creeps up from the lower world.



HORSE-RACING IN ENGLAND AT THE QUEEN'S ACCESSION

BY E. ANTHONY

A SHORT sketch of the racing world of sixty years ago, when Queen Victoria ascended the throne, should surely be included amongst the vignettes of the day. From every class spring lovers of the Turf, and in this year of all others one's fancy harks back to the Old England of 1837. It is a long span, sixty years, and many are the changes which mark the progress of horse-racing during this record-breaking era. Its growth has been simply stupendous, and the present day can assuredly boast more racehorses, more breeders, more owners, more trainers, and more jockeys than any period since the origin of the Turf in the reign of Charles the Second. Never, too, was so much money to be won in stakes. Her Majesty's reign has indeed seen a remarkable advance since she figured as a subscriber to the 'Racing Calendar' of 1837, and the Diamond Jubilee year fittingly saw the Prince of Wales carry off the Gold Cup at 'Royal Ascot.'

To come more directly to the subject of my paper—the Turf as it was in the year of the Queen's accession—a cursory glance through the pages of the Calendar of sixty years ago reveals several familiar names in Bucephalus, Bridegroom, Pilot, Paddy, Chitchat, Cabin Boy and Powick; and a mare named Victoria, owned by a Mr. King, most appropriately distinguished herself by winning no fewer than ten events.

In those days many of the races were run in heats, and the stamina of the candidates was severely tested; for on occasions they would run as many as four heats, each over a distance of two

miles. In running heats, if it could not be decided which horse had won, the race went for nothing, and they all started again, unless the dead heat lay between two horses that had each won a heat. There was a rule that no person should start more than one horse of which he was the owner, either wholly or in part, in his own name or in that of any other person, in any race for which heats were run.

It was in June, 1837, that gate-money meetings were introduced, and Mr. John White, said to have invented the tan-gallop which saves horses' legs when the 'going' is hard, projected the Benevolent Fund, known as the 'Bentinck,' Lord George having taken it up and started it with 2,100*l.*, collected from patrons of the Turf. That Lord George thoroughly deserved such a tribute may be gratefully admitted, if only because he was the originator of the telegraph board, the parade, and the preliminary canter. What would racegoers of the present day do without these? They have come to be regarded as necessities.

That all was not plain sailing for the 'backer' even in those times is evidenced by the wording of the following rule: 'Money given to have a bet laid shall not be returned, though the race be not run.' Jockeys, too, could not claim a walk over as a winning mount, as it was declared that a horse walking over should not be deemed a winner. Other rules and orders of the Jockey Club of that time afford very interesting reading, more especially those relating to trials, where the law was laid down that 'No person shall try the horses of any other person than his declared confederate without giving notice of such trial, by inscribing the name or proper description of the horse tried, and the name of his owner, in the trial-book kept at the Coffee-room, Newmarket, within one hour after the trial has taken place, or by nine o'clock in the morning, in case the trial shall have taken place at an earlier hour; and the hour of running such trial, and also the hour of making the entry, shall be noted in the trial-book. And in case any trial shall not be so entered, the groom having the care of the horse running with the trial horse, and being present at the trial, or, if not present, then the owner of any horse running with such trial horse, shall forfeit and pay to the Stewards of the Jockey Club the penalty or sum of 10*l.* for every such offence; but the Stewards shall have the power to mitigate such penalty to not less than 5*l.* in case it shall fall upon any groom. Every bet made upon or against any horse running in a trial, between the time of such trial and the entering of it in the trial-book, whether it be entered within the time prescribed or not, shall be

PERSIMMON WINS

void. . . . If any person be detected in watching a trial, or shall be proved to have employed any person to watch a trial, he shall be served with a notice to keep off the Heath, and if in the employment of any member of the Club, he shall be dismissed from his service, and not again employed.' However, no notice of trial was required when the gallop took place at a greater distance than twenty-five miles from Newmarket. How the touts fared outside this radius is not set forth. Visions of duck-ponds fill the gap.

The whole system of betting has also changed. Where only one had a bet in those days, hundreds have their fancy nowadays, and back it too. Yet such large sums do not change hands. It is said of Lord George Bentinck, one of the sharpest men the Turf ever knew, that he learnt his experience by dropping 27,000*l.* in one year,[1] and even larger sums than this were lost and won by other owners.

Coming to the actual racing of the Accession year, the classic events furnished at least one stupendous surprise, for Lord Berner's Phosphorus carried off the Derby starting at 40 to 1, and winning by half a length after a great race with Caravan. Two days before the race Phosphorus was so lame that John Day declined riding him, and but for Lord Berner—previously known to the Turf as Major Wilson—insisting on his being started, Phosphorus would not have left his stable. Seventeen runners took part in the race, amongst them Mango, who afterwards distinguished himself by winning the St. Leger for Mr. Greville, that race being noteworthy for the fact that a hot favourite in Epirus fell soon after starting, W. Scott, his jockey, breaking his collar-bone. Henriade also fell in consequence of a dog crossing the course about a distance from home, but he recovered himself, and his rider was not even thrown. The same year Mango beat Wisdom at Stockbridge, and the following interesting account appears in Mr. Taunton's 'Famous Horses:' 'This race was delayed half an hour for the arrival of Lord Chesterfield and Mr. Greville, who came rattling over the hill in an open barouche and four, and were no sooner landed on the course than the former offered 6 to 4, in thousands, on Mango. Wisdom (who was very fine drawn, for you could almost see through him) went off at score, at his best pace, and continued this severe running, with Mango close at his heels, till rounding the turn into the

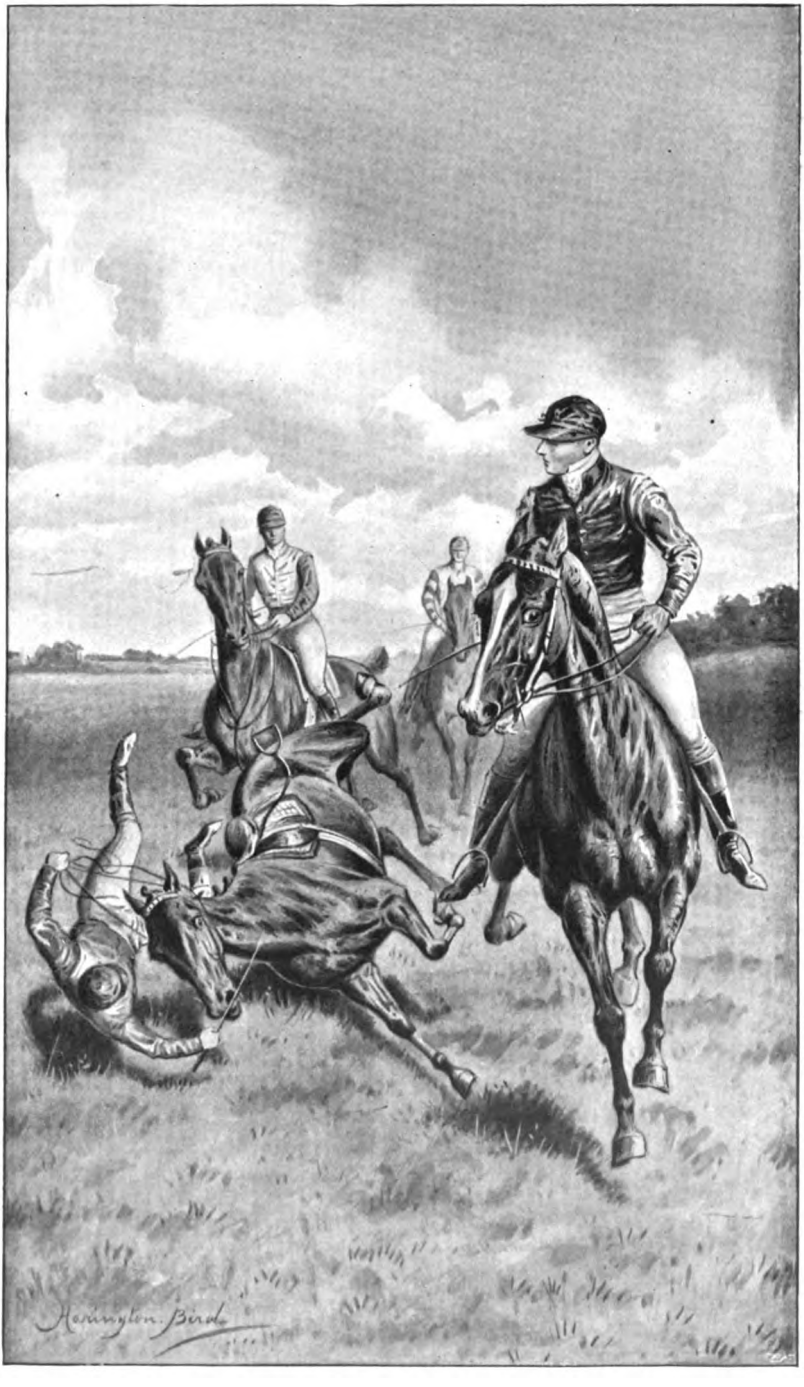
[1] Within the last few years an owner had 14,000*l.* on a horse in a little selling-race at Newmarket. The horse is still in training, and ran twice at Newmarket last month.—Ed.

straight, which they entered almost level, Mango on the inside, and Wisdom sweeping round to the opposite cords. The clang of the whips was heard all up the course, and they ran so nearly level all through that no one could say which had won till the judge's verdict of "Mango by a head" had been given.'

The Two Thousand Guineas was won by Lord Jersey's Achmet, an undefeated brother to Bay Middleton, and the One Thousand Guineas by Mr. John Day's Chapeau d'Espagne, both starting odds on chances, whilst the Oaks fell to Mr. Powlett's Miss Letty, with Chapeau d'Espagne second, the more liberal odds of 7 to 1 being very easily landed. The leading jockeys of the time were Sam Chifney, Robinson, and Harry Edwards, whose deeds are even now recounted.

Horses whose names have been handed down to posterity, and who ran in 1837, include Touchstone, the winner of the Ascot Cup of that year. 'The Druid' remarks of him: 'He was in every way a very peculiar horse. His near fore-ankle never was good, and, at the first Ascot Cup, it had almost risen to the dignity of a "leg." He had very fleshy legs, and turned his hocks out so much, and went so wide behind, that a barrel might have been placed between his hind legs when he was galloping. He went with a perfectly straight knee, and was altogether a very strange goer. Neither distance nor the state of the ground made any difference to him, but at exercise he was very lazy, and could hardly be kicked along. He was (like his brother Launcelot) a very hard puller, and speed was his greatest point. In height he stood at fifteen hands and two inches as nearly as possible. The roots of his ears were the only coarse parts about him. It was grand to watch the wondrous action of his hind legs, and he was equally good for speed and stamina, though he required very fine riding, for he would instantly swerve if his jockey raised the whip. Like many other first-class horses, both before him and after him, Touchstone always failed at the Mostyn Mile; but he could stay for ever. He never began well, but his immense speed soon brought him to the fore. He got his stock in almost every form, and they were mostly browns. Surplice was the finest and biggest of them, Orlando being the most beautiful. As a rule they were best at a mile, with but indifferent action in their slow paces, and shaky on their legs before they had advanced very far on their Turf career. Surplice, Orlando, Newminster, and Cotherstone were the best of his sons.'

That good mare Beeswing was also seen out, winning the Newcastle Cup, the Cleveland Stakes at Doncaster, and the Gold

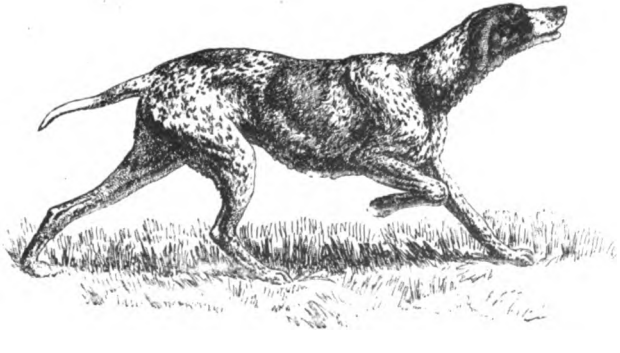


EPIRUS FELL SOON AFTER STARTING

Shield (given in lieu of the Cup). Of Beeswing, who was 'the pride of Northumberland,' we are told that she possessed one of the sweetest heads ever seen. She was a tremendous kicker in her stall, but showed no vice at the post. From her have descended (through Newminster) Hermit, Lord Clifden, Musjid, Cardinal York, Adventurer, Wheel of Fortune, Petrarch, Hampton, Wenlock, Ayrshire, Ladas, Throstle, Sheen, &c.

Another giant of bygone days was Harkaway, known as 'The Irish Eclipse,' a powerful but coarse-looking horse, so much so as to resemble a carriage-horse rather than a racer. In the year under notice he won eleven races in Ireland, including the Royal Whip. His vast stride and great speed were marvellous, and his successes on the Turf such as to make the Americans anxious to secure him. Others who may be mentioned are the illustrious savage General Chasse, who beat Beeswing at Liverpool; Elis, winner of the St. Leger the previous year; Grey Momus, a two-year-old, who later won the Two Thousand Guineas, and finished third for the Derby; Don John, another two-year-old, who blossomed into a Leger winner, and was indisputably the best three-year-old of his year; and Ion, who filled the unlucky position of runner-up in the Derby and Leger.

And now I have come to the end of my tether. Yet I must note that into the 'Racing Calendar' crept other news besides the chronicling of horse-racing. There appeared records of cock-fighting in Great Britain, or 'cocking,' as it was more familiarly called. These battles royal between the kings of the poultry yard were very popular in Cheshire and Lancashire; but that is another story.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

If plain English and the avowed intentions of the framers of an Act of Parliament were to have anything to do with the reading of it, there could only be one possible decision in the Appeal on the recent betting case, and that was the decision arrived at by the Master of the Rolls and four out of five of his learned brethren. The Bill was aimed at 'a new style of betting' which had 'lately sprung up;' and is it not obvious that this could not have been meant to apply to an old style of betting that had not lately sprung up, but had, on the contrary, been practised time out of mind? If betting had been suppressed ten or twenty years ago I know many persons who would now have the best reasons to be fervently grateful; and if it were suppressed now many more in time to come would not look back with the mournful regret that they will some day or other inevitably feel; because many of us are sure to lose a great deal of money in our fatuous pursuit of good things, and by our idiotic belief in 'certainties.' But, in point of fact, betting never could have been and never can be suppressed. If the judges had decided differently, a score of ways would have been found to evade the intended effect of their judgment. No doubt some members of the Anti-Gambling League really mean well, if some others have assiduously laboured to advertise themselves and 'get their names up' from motives of vanity; but the honest members may console themselves in their reverse with the knowledge that their success could have had no good results, and would inevitably have had very mischievous ones. Foolish as betting may be, it is now, for the most part, honourably conducted and carefully supervised. Had the Anti-

Gamblers succeeded, it is very possible that the Committees of Tattersall's and of the Rooms at Newmarket would have disappeared, bookmaking would have been carried on in holes and corners where robberies would assuredly have been rife, and only the rogues would have benefited.

Often I am obliged to neglect my correspondents, want of space being the cause; but this month I must pay attention to a few of them. As a rule—with a fair number of exceptions to it, perhaps, but still as a rule—letters sent to an editor are interesting, and that for an obvious reason: the writer does not take up his pen unless he has something to say, whereas many contributors to public journals have a certain space to fill, and, as it appears at times, a limited number of ideas with which to fill it. Two of my correspondents are angry with me for, as one of them says, 'endeavouring to prove that Galtee More is not Irish.' I did not, however, endeavour to prove anything at all. I merely asked—*vide* last month's issue—whether the child of Ethiopian parents born in England was an Englishman, or whether the progeny of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Brown, of Birmingham, on a temporary visit to Buluwayo, were Zulus, or Matabele, or what not? Here is another question. Supposing that Morganette returned to this country, and gave birth to an own brother to Galtee More, would the foal be an English horse because it was born in England, or an Irish horse because its brother was born in Ireland—of English parents? That is going rather a long way round to fix a nationality, is it not? Yet the own brother to an Irish horse cannot very well be English. I am getting much nearer to an expression of opinion than I did last month, and that opinion is that the accident of birth is an accident, and that a child, human or equine, is English, French, Red Indian, Maori, or Dyak according to his parentage. I am very sorry if this idea offends anybody, and it may be altogether wrong. If my correspondents and others do not choose to accept it there is no compulsion!

Another of my correspondents is 'down on' the bright and amusing 'Jane Austen,' whose letter I published last month. 'Yours on the bike, Arabella' is the signature of Jane Austen's critic, and thus Arabella writes: 'Sir,—I have read with some

interest, and much amusement, the letter of Jane Austen in your July number. The lady is charmingly vague. She is "over thirty:" she may be sixty. She signs herself "yours achingly:" what are her aches? Headache, earache, toothache, or what? Sir, I am a truthful woman! I shall be sixty next August. I have had many illnesses, and all my doctors said they were due to nerves. Seeing women older than myself careering gaily along, I resolved to take to biking. At first it was a struggle. I couldn't mount without help, I couldn't drive the machine up hill, and I daren't let it run down hill. On the level I was fairly right, but even there I wobbled fearfully. With patience I overcame all these difficulties, and now I can ride quite creditably. Illness and weakness have for a long time prevented me from walking more than a short distance, and I had frequently to make use of a bath-chair; now I can bike in all directions, and the bath-chairman has been discarded. A lady in this town, thirty years younger than myself, and similarly incapacitated from walking, has taken to the bike, and can go miles without fatigue. Jane's nerves have been "shattered;" mine, on the contrary, have been strengthened, and I hope, sir, that you will continue to preach up the two-wheeler, in spite of the ravings of such nerve-ridden creatures as Jane.'

Here, too, is another. 'Sir,—I think your sympathy would be far better expended on Miss Jane Austen's brain, or lack of it, than on her body. There is no exercise that is to be compared with cycling either for men or women. To feel yourself whirling through the air on the top of an easy-going machine of good make is exhilarating in the extreme, and the nearest approach that has yet been attained to that much-longed-for method of progression—flying. If Miss Jane will only persevere, I am sure she will soon be able to write you another and more jubilant letter. Cycling cures all ills, and *I* ought to know, as I am the inventor of one of the best makes in the world!' Here, we see, is a little natural prejudice in favour of the cycle, but I am sure the same would be said by others who are not inventors of the 'best makes in the world.'

'A book has been lately published,' Mr. N. S. Alexander writes to me, 'which will be of some interest to fox-hunters and

sportsmen generally. It is called "The Massarenes," by Ouida of the facile pen, and at p. 147 we have given us the reasons why Lord Hurstmonceaux—who is, by the way, represented as leading the life of a country gentleman—has renounced the noble sport of fox-hunting. "I was one day in my woods at Feldon *sketching. Hounds were out,* but I was not with them. I was sitting in the bracken, quite hidden by it, and *an old dog-fox* slouched by me. His tail drooped, he was dead beat and could scarcely drag himself along. He had a bad gash in his side from a stake or *something.* He went up to an old hollow oak and *out of it* came his vixen and *three little cubs.*" The italics in the above are mine. His lordship was sketching, and there were a vixen and three *little* cubs. It was presumably, therefore, about say May or June at the latest; yet *the hounds were out* and hunting an *old dog-fox.* After this, it is not surprising to be told by our authoress that the noblemen and gentlemen of this realm "destroy all the wild bird life of the three kingdoms" in order that they may send large quantities of game to the London market, and that they habitually mow down half-tame game birds for the same laudable purpose. Some readers will no doubt smile and say indulgently that this was written by a woman, but they forget that two-thirds of the readers of Ouida's book will most probably accept that which she has written as gospel. Nowadays all fallacies must at once be exposed and nailed, as it were, to the counter, or they will very soon come to be accepted as veracities.'

The Eton and Harrow match passed off last month with all its usual brilliant success as a social function. The ground was crowded; kindly hosts dispensed hospitality on all sides; everybody was at Lord's; the ladies were dressed for the occasion in their smartest clothes; the gathering was like a mammoth garden-party. And, though only a comparatively small portion of those present seemed to be aware of the fact, two elevens played cricket. It was regarded as not a little selfish of the teams to monopolise the ground, and exclude so many visitors from the green which made so pleasant a promenade; though I believe there was a new interval for tea this time, so that visitors had a little more opportunity of walking about. In truth, year by year the mere cricket becomes less and less important, and the picnic part of the business more and more prominent. This causes much concern to

not a few keen old Etonians and Harrovians, who think that when a cricket match takes place the cricket ought to be the chief thing; and it is not quite certain that they are altogether wrong. The remedy for the existing state of affairs is to alter the date of the match, and have it some time in the holidays instead of at the height of the London season. The authorities raise certain objections to this, to all of which, however, more than adequate answers are forthcoming, though whether a change of date would be popular with the boys is another thing. It seems to depend upon whether the majority want cricket or picnic?

What is the best horse in England at present—that is to say, the best horse in training? Some readers will be inclined to reply 'Persimmon,' others will pronounce for 'Galtee More,' and the worst of it is that between these two there is no 'line'—no possibility of a convincing comparison. The ideal good horse is the horse that has never been beaten, and never even seriously pressed; both Galtee More and Persimmon have been beaten, and on other occasions, when they have won, been desperately hard put to it, and I cannot therefore regard either as worthy to rank with St. Simon and Ormonde, for instance. But the question further arises whether Persimmon and Galtee More are even the best that have run this year, and whether it cannot be clearly demonstrated that neither is equal to Victor Wild? The argument would be tedious and possibly perplexing to those of my readers who do not study 'form;' those who do can work it all out for themselves, starting with the fact that Victor Wild showed himself at Ascot to be more than two stone better than Knight of the Thistle, who is practically now the same horse as Velasquez, which means, considering the weight-for-age scale, Velasquez being a three-year-old, that he is about a stone in front of Knight of the Thistle. My idea is that 12 lb. would bring Galtee More and Velasquez together. It is harder to sum up Persimmon; but as a two-year-old I doubt his having been much more than a stone better than Knight of the Thistle—see the Middle Park Plate running. It might be very plausibly demonstrated that the 'common handicap horse,' Victor Wild, is the best of the lot.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

September 1897

A CRICKET TRAGEDY

BY REX RAY

THE harvest was already gathered in, and the autumn leaves fell thick with the breeze that bore the last of our swallows south, but the sun was kindly, and the smell of the corn was not yet gone from the fields on the day we played the 'Spitfire.' Seldom, I imagine, had the little village of Walstead been so gaily clothed; indeed, the strange mixture of colours among the flags and bunting in which we dressed her seemed almost sarcastic beside the old thatched cottages and quaint antiquated inn which lined her High Street.

I was a young man then, but I remember the scene as though it were only yesterday. Why the frigate should have taken it into her head to anchor off a quiet little out-of-the-way spot like Walstead was a matter of much conjecture to us; but when we had watched her rollicking crew under the orders of a particularly jovial boatswain roll some fifty barrels or more along the shore and fill them up at old widow Silvester's well, we seemed to be given our answer.

Such were the men who made our country what it is, and many of those who quietly filled the waterbutts were sailors who had won their scars beside Nelson, serving out the powder and shot to Spaniards and French alike with as little fear for themselves as they had when the widow's tiny dog barked and yelped

at their naked feet as they playfully pushed one another on to the flower beds. Our hearts went out to men like these, and if they did tread down a few primroses, I warrant the widow was not angry, but rather felt it an honour.

No sooner did Squire Thornton hear of their arrival than he rode down on his bay cob to invite them up to the manor. He was a very dear friend of mine. I was a guest of his at that time, presumably studying medicine; but when I tell you his daughter Muriel was the daintiest and sweetest girl in all the world, and had kept up a correspondence with me ever since we studied together at the dame school at Carbury, you will understand.

The squire's reception on board had been of the most jovial possible character. He had been made much of and had drunk of such wines, he afterwards told me, as were originally intended for the mess of a French man-o'-war. In return for the good fellowship he met there he extended his invitation to as many of the crew as could come ashore, boasting of the fine lads he had at Walstead, and challenging the ship to find a team which would beat them at cricket. And so it happened the match was arranged.

I was sitting on the fence which extended round the meadow talking to Muriel and watching my men out on the pitch catching the ball for practice when the players of the 'Spitfire' arrived.

'You've a smart-looking set out there, captain,' said the lieutenant in charge, swaggering up and shaking me cordially by the hand, bowing also to Muriel with his hat held gently over his heart as though he had just clapped a butterfly against it.

'Smart,' I replied, thinking it was a strange term to apply to them; 'you chaff us, sir, when you call them smart. That they are big and strong I will not gainsay, but they are heavy country lads for the most part, used only to the plough and to such hard work as one finds about a farm. They will cut a sorry figure, I fear, beside your sailors.'

'Aye,' said he, 'they require a year or two on board with us, perhaps. Then their mothers wouldn't know them.'

In this way we found pleasant conversation for a while until the lower gate opened and the squire drove in with some officers from the ship. Then many other people began to collect from various quarters, some in carriages, others on horseback, and many on foot. Considering it therefore time to start, we tossed for innings.

'Come along, my men,' cried the lieutenant good-naturedly

to his crew when he had won the call; 'we'll do the batting last, when the day is warmer and the girls are about to talk to.' And then he gave his orders for the game.

'YOU'VE A SMART-LOOKING SET OUT THERE, CAPTAIN'

'You must bear away there aft of the three little masts, bosun,' said he, speaking in a way which he thought the men would best

understand. 'Stop the ball, you know, and send it back to me. Bilson, you can luff up a bit to 'midships if you want to be useful Keep your weather eye open. I'll deal out the shot all right.'

Then Bilson, who had never seen the game before, thinking some hard and heavy work was required of him, began to strip his shirt, whereat the lieutenant threatened that if he did not immediately rig his carcase again the ladies would all die. And surely there could have been no team of cricket so queerly placed as when there was an end to his issuing orders.

It being the desire of my fellows that I should be the first to bat, I sauntered out to the wicket.

'You must make all the runs you can,' said Muriel to me as I left her, 'and never get out.'

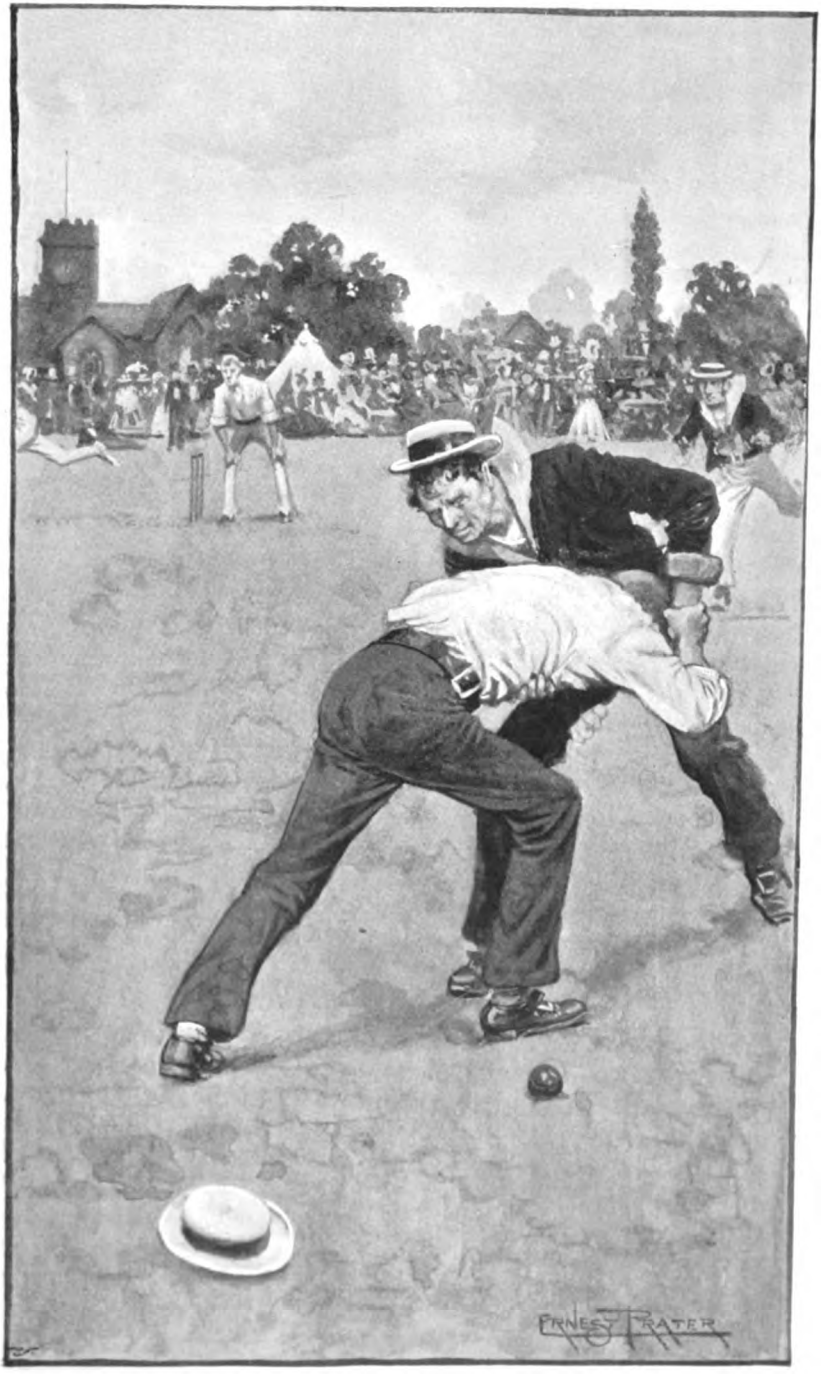
'I'll try,' I replied, 'but you musn't be disappointed if I fail.' And if there was ever a time when I desired to play my very best it was at that moment.

I went to the wickets and asked for block, which the lieutenant gave me. Then looking round to see where I might place a ball, I was struck with the strangeness of the situation. Except for the three backstops, men wandered about, it seemed to me, in all the places where it was unusual for a ball to go, caring more apparently about the chewing of their tobacco than anything else.

The first ball delivered I could not reach, it being a great distance from the wickets; but the second and third were nearer, so that I was able to drive them each well over into the long grass, where it took many of their men to find them, during which time I ran a score of runs. The men of His Majesty's ship 'Spitfire,' I soon found, knew nothing whatever of the game, and the lieutenant but very little. There was, however, something about the latter so cheery and gay, that his men, I think, would have gladly chased the leather for ever in their anxiety to please.

'Look out to starboard there,' he would shout when the men were getting slack and inattentive to the game. 'A quid of baccy for the man who stops the next!' This would make them wake up again, so that they would often wrestle for the ball in order to throw it back.

So easy was the bowling, and so poor the stopping of the sailors, I really think I might have continued batting there till to-day; but when I had made about as many runs as I have now years, I touched the ball by misadventure and slightly turned it from its course, so that the boatswain caught it accidentally,



THEY WOULD OFTEN WRESTLE FOR THE BALL IN ORDER TO THROW IT BACK

the ball falling into the loose folds of his shirt about the neck. When the lieutenant cried 'Well held!' the boatswain looked round in wonder, and none of his side understood the meaning of the words; but as soon as they discovered they were rid of me in this way, and were going to play against a fisher youth named Evans instead, they cheered lustily.

'Did you make a duck?' asked my little Muriel, jumping up from her seat as I returned, and clapping her little hands together with the rest.

'Not exactly,' I replied, smiling at the idea.

'Oh, I am sorry, Jim,' said she. 'I wish you'd made a duck, it sounds so nice. Never mind; better luck next time!'

My successors did not make any great stand before the lieutenant, but fell away like so many ninepins, being all bowled, to the great amusement of the sailors, by certain low balls called 'grassers' which were very destructive. However, I had by some chance made seventy-eight runs, which, with the thirteen added by the others, brought our total up to ninety-one, when the whole side was out, and we repaired to the tables for lunch.

If the tars of the 'Spitfire' could not play, they could at least eat. And what a spread there was! To say that the long trestle tables groaned beneath the weight of the victuals would be an injustice to the latter. They were past the stage of groaning, and set themselves silently and with a will to uphold all that was put upon them. The meadow was in no way soft or damp, but the burthen of forty elbows, in addition to the sumptuous display of all that was good, drove the legs of the trestles so deep into the earth that spades were fetched to get them out when the feast was over.

The officers who had driven up with the squire lunched with him in the carriage, and Muriel has often told me since how they chaffed her for being a pretty girl, and passed their speeches round so gallantly that she could have kissed them all.

For my part I lunched beside those whose captain I was, and a lighter-hearted lot it would have been difficult to find, though, Heaven knows! they made but a poor show beside the visitors. The lieutenant sat before me at the opposite end of the long table, surrounded by such as had played with him. It was strange that we had not mixed more together; but the country lads were shy, and clung to one another's company, watching open-mouthed the antics of the sailors.

At the smaller tables there were many others from the ship jesting in the same fashion, and telling fine stories of prize-money

to the fishermen who had gathered round. I noticed, too, there was no scarcity of what village girls there were at Walstead standing in the background, with wondering eyes and rosy cheeks, yet longing to come nearer. One only, less bashful than the rest, a comely maid named Nellie Buyers, stood forward by the men, tempting the steel of the boatswain's cutlass to cut her pretty fingers as she felt its edge. For this I saw the sailors liked her exceedingly.

When the feast was over we resumed our game. Placing the men as I thought best, I took the ball myself to bowl. The lieutenant was the first to come in, and very fine he looked beside the heavy yokels that stood to get him out.

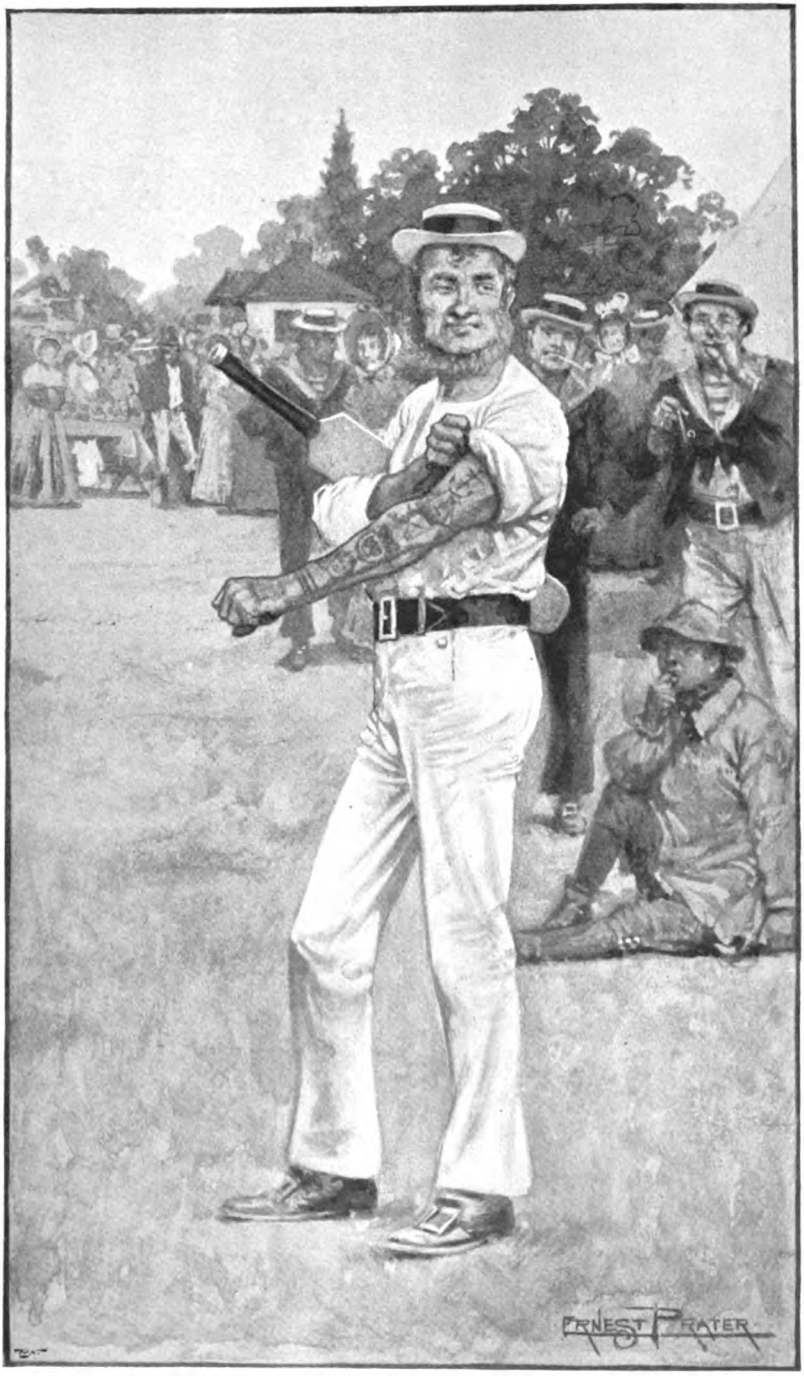
'You must be easy with me, captain,' he said to me, opening his shoulders as though he would send the ball out of the meadow. 'None of your grassers.'

Thus instructed, I gave him a full pitch right on to the top of his stumps, which, however, he seemed to like just as little. Whether it was that he had not quite digested his meal or that he was not used to handling the bat I cannot say, but he hit at it with so little judgment that he was obliged to retire almost as soon as he came in.

After this the boatswain entered, amid much laughter from the ship's men and giggling among the girls, with whom he had become already a great favourite. Truly I could scarcely keep from smiling myself when he rolled up his sleeve as far as it would go, baring a brawny arm that would have served for the leg of a horse, all tattooed with ships and anchors. It was said he had laid many a Frenchman low before with a marlinespike, and had little doubt but what he could handle a wooden club as well.

'Come on, mounseer,' he shouted to the ball, as I gave him a quiet one on the leg side to see him smite. 'Got him on the port bow!' he added, catching it full on his knuckles, and sending it flying away into the grass for three. But so much did the people cheer to see him make a point that he would not stop at three, thinking only of running up a great score, and continued to run as many as eight times up and down the pitch, even after his wicket had been put down. Then he stood up to bat again, and refused to move for all the men on the coast until I had given him another which bowled him out.

The remainder of the men played more or less in the same way, though they made no runs at all, only staying in just so long as I was not able to give them a straight ball. Great fuss was



AFTER THIS THE BOATSWAIN ENTERED

made over the boatswain that day because of the eight runs which he had scored against our ninety-one, but very dreadful were the oaths he swore when he found that if he had continued to run ninety-two they might have won the match.

As soon as the game was over I rushed away to speak to Muriel.

'O Jim, what fun!' cried she in an ecstasy of delight. 'Captain Owen told me all about it. Just fancy you beating all those men yourself; great strong fierce men like that, and you so——

'So what?' I said, catching her up as she hesitated at the word, and I felt that she must fall into her own trap.

'Oh, so foolish.'

We wandered together out of the meadow by the upper gate, and left the crowd to themselves. The sky had just a tinge of red in it, and the breeze was gradually dropping out as we strolled between the hedgerows discussing the more amusing features of the day.

'I wonder where they've gone to now,' I remarked, an hour or so later, as we turned towards home again, round by the old steep hill which runs beside the rookery.

'Why, Captain Owen has invited all the players and a lot of the fisher lads besides to go on board. He's going to give them a dinner,' answered Muriel. 'Oh, he is such a dear old man, you don't know. We wanted him to come to us to-night, but he can't come; nor can any of the others. He says "Duty before pleasure," and they are so short-handed they all have to be on duty.'

'There seemed to be very few on duty to-day,' I replied. 'I suppose they're going to sail.'

'Oh, no, they can't sail, because all the village lads are on board.'

'Muriel,' I said, 'I may be wrong; but I think I'll go down at once to the shore. Do you think you can manage to find your way home alone?'

'Why?'

'I'll tell you why afterwards, perhaps. I don't quite know myself yet.'

'Can I come with you?'

'I think you had better not. You're safer here.'

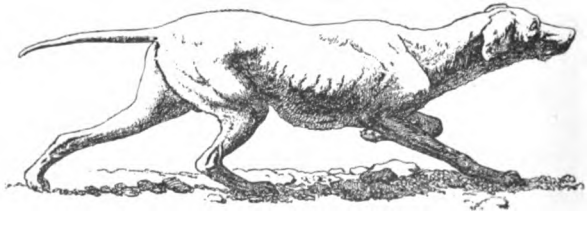
I left her staring after me in wonder, and made my way quietly back to the village. As I went along down the High Street I observed that it was entirely deserted, even the old inn

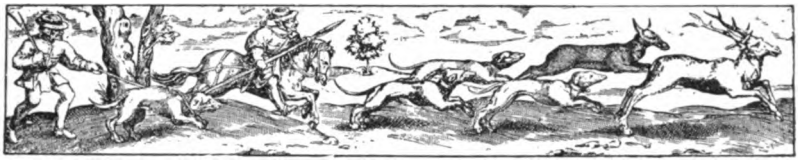
looked desolate, there not being one apparently in the whole countryside, besides ourselves, who had failed to join in the procession down to the shore. I hurried on faster than ever. Five minutes more brought me to the brow of the hill that overlooked the beach.

On arrival there a sad sight met my gaze. Frantic women and hysterical girls clung to one another weeping and screaming, some tearing at their hair with impotent rage, and others alternately waving their kerchiefs out to sea, and then sitting down to soak the same with tears. The Squire, on his bay cob again, rode wildly up and down beside the edge of the water, swearing roundly at the ship, while other old fishermen and farmers whom I had seen an hour before on the field, strained away at a heavy smack which lay upon the beach. All this I seemed to see at a glance.

'So this is the return for my hospitality,' cried the Squire, shaking his riding whip towards the vessel. 'Who is to put in my crops? You lying thieves!' and then he rode at full gallop beside the sea once more to hurry up the few old folk who puffed and blew with the exertion of running out the boat. Then it was I noticed that the younger men were all away and I knew that they had been unwittingly pressed into the King's service.

Looking out across the sea I saw the frigate's answer. Her anchor was up, and as she stood out towards the horizon with such faint breeze as was yet to be felt upon the water, a long puff of smoke shot out from one of her stern ports, and a few moments later the boom of a cannon thundered in towards us.





SOME RECENT ST. LEGERS

BY ALFRED E. T. WATSON

THE Derby is of course always the Derby, the great event of the racing year, in the eye of the world in general, and no conservative lover of the Turf would have it otherwise; but if the question came to be argued, it would be hard to say why the Derby is to be considered greater than the St. Leger, in which, as a rule, the Derby horses renew their struggle over a far fairer and better course, with the further attraction that in 'the mares' month' it often happens that a filly with the prestige of having won the Oaks, together perhaps with one or two others whose friends think that they should have won the 'ladies' race,' or would have done so had they taken part in it, join also in the contest. I fancy, too, that there is much more of the spirit of sport among the throng that assemble to see a Leger on the Doncaster Town Moor than among the crowd at Epsom on the Derby day. No small proportion of the visitors to the Surrey downs care nothing whatever about the horses; this is obvious to anyone who strolls among the coaches on the hill. But observation suggests that there are comparatively few men who go professedly to see the Leger without really desiring to see it, and moreover knowing something, probably not a little, of the animals engaged in it. A lusty shout goes up when the good horse that three or four seconds hence will have won the Derby gets his last opponent into difficulties and makes the result inevitable; but it is, I think, a deeper-toned roar, with more volume and exhilaration in it, which proclaims the winner of the Leger.

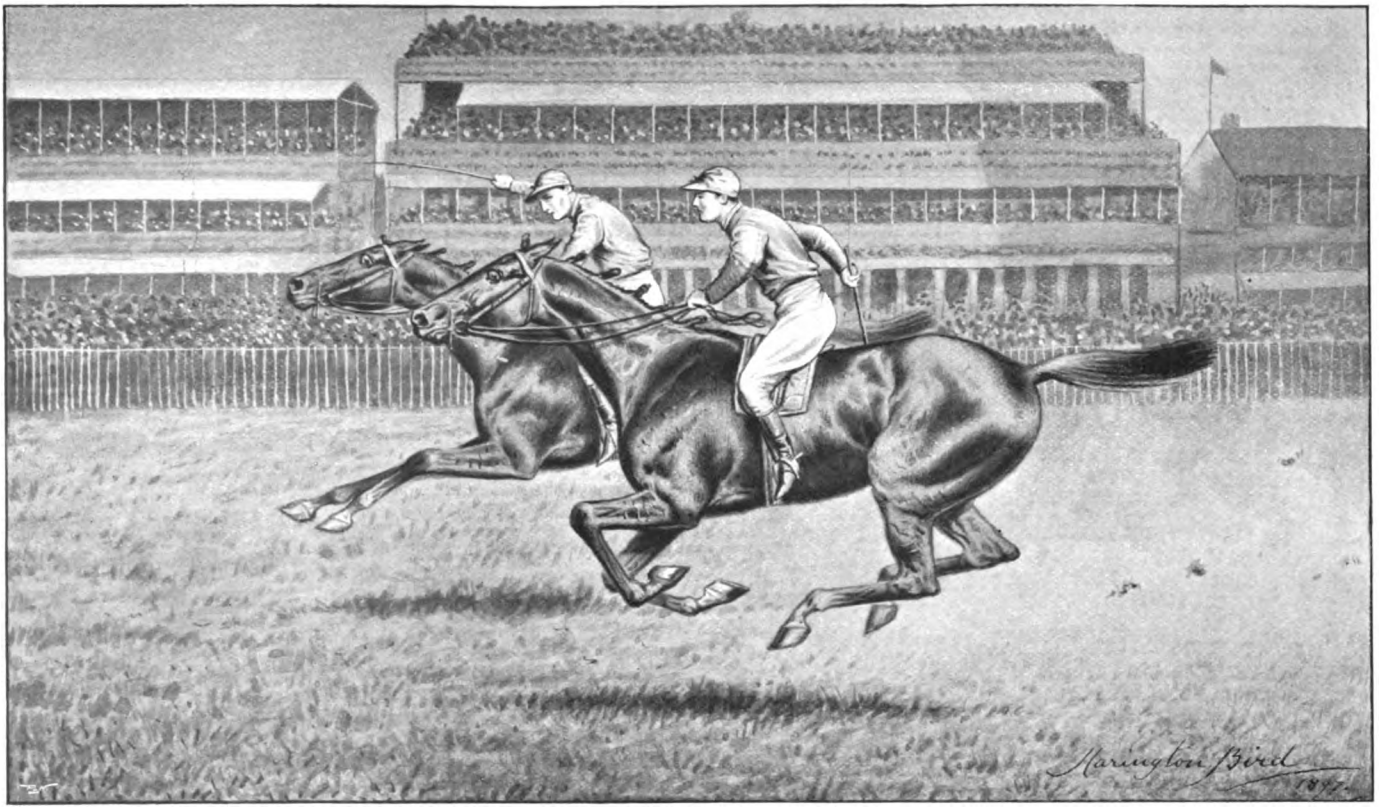
What glorious names are associated with the race! Did five such horses ever succeed each other in any list of winners as those

which carried off the Leger from 1849 to 1853—Flying Dutchman, Voltigeur, Newminster, Stockwell, and West Australian? There were giants on the earth in those days, though I am not endeavouring to assert that the horses of fifty years ago were as a rule better than our own. On the contrary, I believe that our animals are at least as speedy and would be found to stay as well if there were more necessity for finding and training stayers. The good horses—the great horses—came in a bunch half-way through the century; but against the five named might we not bring St. Simon, Ormonde, Isinglass—and which shall we say for the other two? Donovan? St. Gatien? Robert the Devil? that wonderfully good mare La Flêche? Happily, we have plenty of choice!

Why is it that the fillies do so well in the Leger? Presumably they are at their best in 'the mares' month,' for consider this: Just about 80 per cent. of horses as against mares have started for the Leger in the last thirty years, but eleven mares have won—Achievement, Formosa, Hannah, Marie Stuart, Apology, Jannette, Dutch Oven, Seabreeze, Memoir, La Flêche, and Throstle. Marie Stuart's race was assuredly one of the most sporting ever known—in the brief space I can occupy in dealing with a large subject I must pick my subjects for gossip rather arbitrarily. Doncaster had not been out since he won the Derby; Marie Stuart had won the Coronation Stakes and the Yorkshire Oaks since winning *the* Oaks; their owner, the late Mr. Merry, did not know which was the better, colt or filly, so they fought it out on the Town Moor, and Marie Stuart won—a head. But there is this important point to be borne in mind. At that time colts (8 st. 10 lb.) gave fillies (8 st. 5 lb.) as much as 5 lb.; now the weights are 9 st. and 8 st. 11 lb., that is 3 lb. The difference of 2 lb. would just—as nearly as possible—alter the head; so that colt and filly were, it seems, precisely the same animal, as the phrase goes.

To win the Derby is a great achievement; but on what slight events success and failure depend! The late James Goater always declared that Rayon d'Or ought to have won in what is immortalised in Turf history as Sir Bevys' year; that he was always a better horse than Sir Bevys and failed at Epsom because his jockey (J. Morris) was tied down with orders to ride in a certain way. 'Let me ride as I like and I can't be beaten,' was his request when he was put up to ride at Doncaster; and win he did—Sir Bevys was nowhere.

The next year's Leger was one of the most exciting on record,



MARIE STUART WON BY A HEAD

for Robert the Devil and Bend Or, who had not met since the sensational Derby, when Archer, riding Bend Or with one hand, snatched the race from an inferior jockey. It poured in torrents; but the rain could not damp the excitement, whatever else it might deluge. The 'talent' did not think that there had been much wrong with the Derby running, and odds of 11 to 8 were laid on Bend Or, 4 to 1 against Robert the Devil; but the latter ploughed through the mud and won very easily in Tom Cannon's hands by three lengths from Cipollata, The Abbot, and Zealot; Bend Or hopelessly beaten—in company with Jenny Howlet, who had won the Oaks, but was rightly thought to have no chance here. The jockeys drew more than 2 lb. over weight when they came back soaked, but were, of course, passed, as the reason was obvious.

Iroquois' Leger fell out very much according to general expectation, in contrast to the race of next year, one of the most remarkable of surprises. The luck of the 'mares' month' was here entirely vindicated, as of four fillies that ran three filled the first three places; and as for the fourth, the late Duke of Hamilton's Actress, she was really what might be described as a rank outsider, for she was not even mentioned in the betting, in which the American colt Romeo was quoted at 1,000 to 6. To be a worse 'favourite' than that is to be an outsider indeed! Odds of 11 to 8 were laid on Geheimniss, who had won the Oaks; 100 to 15 against Shotover, who had won the Derby; and they finished second and third, four lengths between them. Dutch Oven, who started at 40 to 1 and won comfortably, had been so far behind Shotover in the Derby and had run so badly in the Great Yorkshire Stakes shortly before Doncaster, that she seemed to have no sort of chance. The explanation doubtless was that she stayed better than the other two mares. At the following First October Meeting she twice won, Across the Flat, a mile and a quarter—which requires no little staying power (for there are miles *and* miles); and on a third occasion she was only beaten by a neck in the Champion Stakes over the same course by Tristan (F. Archer) and Thebais (C. Wood), who ran a dead-heat.

Ossian, who won in 1883, was a moderate horse, as was The Lambkin next year, when three fillies ran and two of them were second and third. If another had stood training, she would, I have little doubt, have been first—Busybody, a really good mare, who won the Oaks from Superba very much more easily than the half-length beating which Tom Cannon gave Archer might seem to indicate; and here Superba was third, but poor Busybody, a charming mare, had broken down. I well remember going to see

her, some weeks before the race, in her box at Danebury, and vainly trying to believe that there might be a shadow of hope for her. The handsome Melton with his beautiful action—it was always a treat to see him gallop—had the easiest of tasks in 1885. Archer let him canter home six lengths in front of a procession, for Isobar (second) was the same distance in front of Lord Cadogan's very moderate mare Lonely, who covered the Derby course in considerably better time than that taken by Ormonde, thus affording an example of the value of the time test.

As for Ormonde's Leger, one of the half-score races he secured as a three-year-old, which with three the year before and three the year afterwards make up his undefeated record, the only wonder is that anything should have been found to oppose him. It was a most hopeless enterprise, as, indeed, the betting showed—for one cannot ignore the proof of the general opinion which the state of the odds affords. Seven to 1 on Ormonde, 100 to 7 against St. Mirin, 25 to 1 against St. Michael, 100 to 1 Exmoor, Coracle, Easington, and Lord Lumley. Archer prevented the horse from finishing more than four lengths in front of the field; and that is all there is to be said of Ormonde's Leger.

From an Ormonde to a Kilwarlin is a deep descent; but the three-year-olds of a decade since were a most melancholy lot, and the race at Doncaster only helped to show how lucky the owner of Merry Hampton had been to win the Derby with such a colt. Robinson, a very moderate jockey in spite of his training—for Tom Cannon's apprentices (Watts, S. Loates, Mornington, and Kempton, for instance) have nearly always been altogether exceptionally good—managed to get left when the flag fell; the others, however, going so slowly that Kilwarlin was soon with them again, and he got home first by half a length from Merry Hampton. But things were much more interesting next year, when what one specially likes to see in a Leger—the opposition of Derby and Oaks winners—was the feature of the race. Ayrshire and Seabreeze had met once as two-year-olds, in the New Stakes, when Friar's Balsam beat them both very easily indeed (Seabreeze second, Ayrshire a bad third), and each of them had won four races that year. How Robinson contrived to get beaten on Seabreeze in the One Thousand by Briar-root is a mystery, unless he incorrectly imagined that Mr. Douglas Baird's runaway filly would come back to him, and so did not set off in pursuit till too late. That should not have been counted against Seabreeze, nor most assuredly should her defeat in the Rous Memorial at Ascot, where Robinson ought to have landed the odds laid on his

mount without the least difficulty, but where Tom Cannon beat him on Phil simply and solely by very good jockeyship against very bad. Seabreeze ran so badly in the Sussex Stakes at Goodwood that she can scarcely have been herself, though—Robinson again up—she was an even-money favourite. Ayrshire, however, had meantime won the Two Thousand and Derby, Friar's Balsam being, happily for the Duke of Portland, incapacitated; and the Derby winner was fractionally the better favourite of the two. But the New Stakes running was confirmed, as it was subsequently in the Lancashire Plate; and Robinson won both these, though he nearly brought about an awful catastrophe later on at Newmarket, when in the Newmarket Oaks Seabreeze, with odds of 200 to 7 on her, only beat Bellatrix—a wretched mare who ran ten times as a three-year-old without winning a single race—by a short head. Bellatrix, indeed, was beaten four times as a two-year-old, and thrice as a four, never having won a single race whilst in training; and how much more than a stone she was behind Seabreeze it would be difficult to calculate.

Although Bellatrix did not win, Seabreeze's exceedingly narrow escape from defeat affords a lesson as to the dangerous uncertainty of 'certainties' on the Turf; and there was another of the same when Enthusiast beat Donovan in the Two Thousand, that being the only race in which Donovan was defeated as a three-year-old, and the St. Leger was one of his seven successes. Thirteen to 8 on Donovan and 100 to 6 against his Newmarket conqueror proved how wrong that result was considered. Here Enthusiast finished many lengths behind.

Memoir was one of the first of the St. Simon fillies to win fame for her sire. She, Signorina, and Semolina came out in the same year, and won just two dozen races between them, to which total, however, Memoir only contributed three. Memoir, indeed, did not run more than respectably in her first season, but she improved with age, and as a three-year-old won five races out of ten actually and six out of ten practically; for she could have beaten her stable companion Semolina in the One Thousand Guineas, and would have done so had not her owner, the Duke of Portland, declared to win with the mare he bred in preference to the one he bought. The French-bred Heaume—French-bred, but nevertheless a son of Hermit—was favourite for the Leger of 1890, and Sainfoin was second favourite, moderate as he was generally supposed to be—and showed that he was, by running an indifferent fourth. It seems odd that Memoir should have started at 10 to 1, but there was some doubt as to her staying—a

doubt she effectually dissipated, however, by winning by two lengths. But it is not certain that the result of the race was correct, as a serious scrimmage took place at the bend. T. Loates, on St. Serf, was knocked right out of his saddle over the neck of Alloway, and was put back into his seat by Cannon; others suffered, and there is not time for such episodes in a race for the Leger—at least, they have a considerable effect on the finish.

The Leger and the Derby of 1891 were very nearly going to France, a thing that has not happened since 1865, when the Comte de Lagrange swooped down on us with Gladiateur; for though it is true that he also won the Leger with Rayon d'Or in 1879, during the intermediate years he had become to all intents and purposes half an English owner—that is to say, he raced as much in England as in France. M. Blanc had sent to this country two colts, the chestnut Gouverneur and the bay Révérend, both sons of the speedy Energy, who seemed somewhat unlikely to be the sire of horses that stayed. Gouverneur, however, started favourite for the Two Thousand Guineas, in which he ran badly, the winner appearing in a colt from Kingsclere that ran in public for the first time—Common, a son of Isonomy and Thistle. In the Derby Gouverneur made a better fight of it, and in the Leger the bay tried his luck, making a better fight still, for Common had to do his best to win by a length. Four races out of five—Surefoot beat him for the Eclipse—was the record of this Leger winner, who was sold after the race for 14,000 guineas, and is doing tolerably well at the stud.

Another peculiarly exciting Leger came in 1892. Orme, after the sensational illness or accident, the result either of disease or of an atrocious attempt to poison him by somebody who had access to the stable, had been magnified into one of that rather extensive lot, 'the horse of the century;' and here he was at Doncaster to run for the great race! Odds on were laid—by those who believed he could stay a mile and three-quarters; those who did not for one single moment believe anything of the sort, if they wanted to bet at all, backed his stable companion, that good mare La Flêche, 7 to 2 being taken about her and 10 to 1 about Sir Hugo, who had beaten her in the Derby—a striking proof of what was thought about the relative merits of the two, the Derby notwithstanding. La Flêche precisely followed the example of her sister Memoir, winning by two lengths; Sir Hugo was second; he was many lengths behind her a little later in the Lancashire Plate. Orme was nowhere in particular—badly beaten, in fact, a consequence his very persistent admirers declared of his having

T. Loates, on St. Serf, was knocked right out of his Saddle over the neck of Alloway

been badly ridden. Whether he was badly ridden, and if so, why, remain matters for argument; but a great many careful observers of Turf affairs will never be persuaded that over the St. Leger course Orme would ever have had a chance with La Flêche.

During the years 1892 and 1893 Ravensbury had acquired a habit of following Isinglass home over all kinds of courses in different parts of the country, and the St. Leger was a case in point. When Isinglass started for a race it was his rule to come in first; there is no rule without exception, it is said, and one exception is to be noted in his case, where he could not be persuaded to make his own running in the Lancashire Plate, and so met with the one defeat that interrupts his list of triumphs. Precedent was carefully observed in the Leger of 1893, which was in fact a precise reproduction of the Middle Park Plate, Isinglass first, Ravensbury second, Le Nicham third. No more need be said about a race which fell out precisely in accordance with expectation.

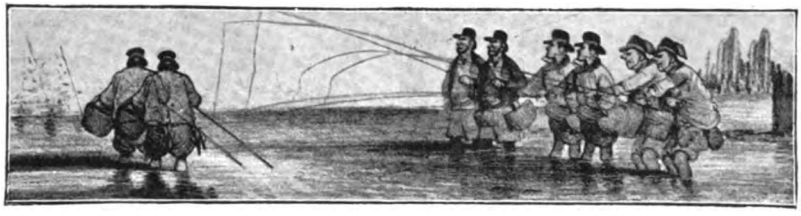
Nevertheless, the proverb which declares that 'nothing happens but the unexpected' is at times justified, and it certainly was so in the year after Isinglass had won.

'It is a pity that mare of yours has turned jady,' I remarked to John Porter, whom I met early in the morning on the Town Moor the day before the Leger of 1894.

'Yes, it is,' he replied, 'but you can't wonder at it when she has to keep on galloping with a horse about 21 lb. better than herself.' The colt of which this estimate was given by the shrewd and experienced trainer was Matchbox, who had been beaten by Ladas in the Two Thousand a length and a half, again in the Derby the same distance, and who was to have a third try over a course which many imagined would suit Matchbox better than his rival. The unexpected happened here with a vengeance. Ladas once more beat Matchbox by as nearly as possible the regulation distance; but Throstle, who should have been several lengths behind her stable companion, finished some lengths in front of him, winning, to the general amazement, a result due to the remarkable judgment with which she was handled by Mornington Cannon. Matchbox was sold to the Austrian Government for 18,000*l*. It is not often that a man with a horse to sell finds such an extremely liberal purchaser.

The three-year-olds in Sir Visto's year were really too bad to be worth discussion, and Persimmon's win from half a dozen moderate opponents is too recent to need comment. Whether he was as good as St. Frusquin—believed not to have been quite

himself in the Derby—as a three-year-old, and whether St. Frusquin would have been as good as he was as a four-year-old had Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's colt stood training, are questions which afford enless discussion, as there is no possibility of proof. Now we are on the eve of another Leger, which at the time of writing looks at the mercy of Galtee More, as there seems too much reason to believe that Velasquez does not stay; his best friends regretfully express doubts as to his capacity in that direction. But greater surprises have occurred than the defeat of Galtee More would be!



CASTING A LINE

BY E. F. T. BENNETT

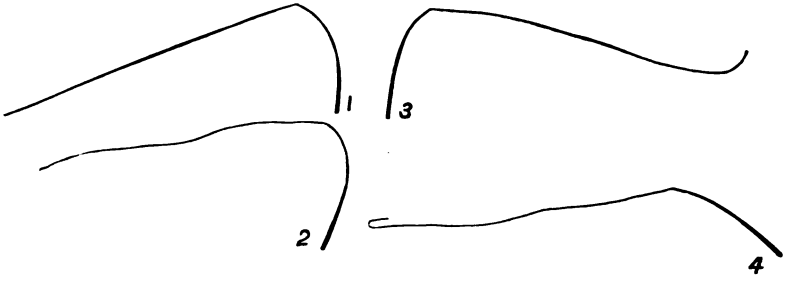
THERE are thousands of ways of casting a line, but the end and aim of all casting is to be able to offer your fly or flies to the fish in as natural a way as possible.

We met an interesting fisherman in Derbyshire one day, for it was his first attempt with a fly. He had just retired from business, and having heard so much in praise of trout fishing, had determined to take it up as his amusement. His frock coat and town appearance were not quite the thing, but he was nevertheless a most satisfactory person to deal with, because he was anxious to learn.

He had no idea of the habits of trout, or how to use his tackle, and so he took no pains to hide himself from the fish, and found it impossible to cast his line out. His evident mortification enlisted our sympathies, and our offer to instruct him was gladly accepted. We pointed out the necessity of balancing rod, line, casting line, and flies, first by making two casting lines from his one. The three flies were next attached at proper intervals, and placed according to their respective weights, the lightest, of course, at the end, for nothing is more conducive to tangles in and out of water than a heavy fly at the end with lighter ones above it. In fact, from reel to end fly the taper should be as perfect as possible. In a stream a heavy fly travels more slowly than a lighter one and consequently runs the chance of being caught by it, and the same thing may happen when the flies are in the air. The other half of his long casting line was neatly rolled up and put in the book for future use. As the lesson went on and he began to send the line over the water with much cracking behind his back, he was surprised that no trout came; but an examination soon made him aware that this was not to be wondered at, for all the flies were gone.

However, when he had thoroughly grasped the idea that trout were frightened away by his presence and that a whip-like use of the rod was not right, he set to work with renewed energy to learn the art, and doubtless he soon became a fly-fisher.

To describe the action of casting a line by diagrams can only give a little help, and as the side view is more easy to study than the plan, in which the curves made by rod point and line might be apt to mislead, the side view alone is given.



1, the lift; 2, rod and line travelling back (back stroke); 3, rod travelling forward just before line is at full stretch (forward stroke); 4, rod imperceptibly stopping before fly falls (end of cast)

The driving stroke at golf is effected by one full sweep of the club, in which the head travels at different speeds so imperceptibly melting into each other, that where the greatest pace should be given can only be felt to be thoroughly understood. So the fly rod, too, should make one sweep only, with the most delicate gradations of speed throughout. Perhaps Joachim could illustrate this with his bow on the string, by piano, crescendo, forte, fortissimo, and so on to pianissimo.

The golf stroke practically ends at fortissimo, though the club still travels after the ball is struck, and it is at pianissimo that the fly should be over the spot, and the note finishes as it touches the water.

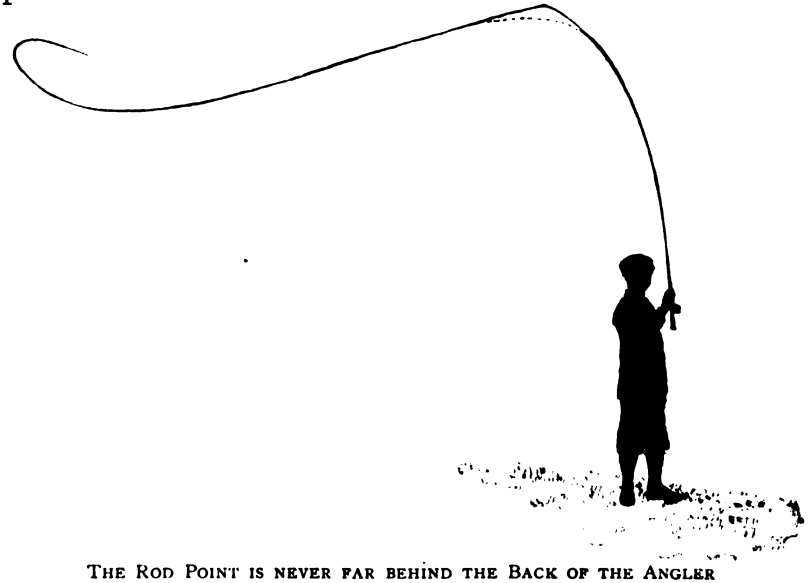
Discord immediately follows if the trout is in waiting and wants the fly. His rush may be a sudden dart from the bottom, or a gentle suck if he is near the top of the water, and a row is the result if the hook should lay hold of him in either case.

In a perfect cast the line appears to make well above the angler's head a beautifully gradated curve which ends at last in a straight line over the water. The rod point is never far behind the back of the angler, and, as it passes forward with lessening pace, the line, and last of all the end fly, are at full stretch, when the utmost delicacy of touch comes in to lay the fly or flies on the water without the slightest disturbance of the surface. Such

a cast should be aimed at even on rough water, for the best work is done by those who are in the habit of using their tools in the best possible manner always.

Illustrations Nos. 1 and 2 show the two parts of the cast that are so difficult to do really well, and which are such a stumbling block to beginners.

Whether up, down, or across the stream, with wet, dry, or sunken fly, the action of casting a line is the same, and must be adapted to every kind of position in which the angler may be placed.



THE ROD POINT IS NEVER FAR BEHIND THE BACK OF THE ANGLER
Dotted line perfect

To keep the elbow near the side is good advice to the beginner, for this will compel him to use his wrist and the top of the rod properly; but for the expert no hard and fast rules can be made, for how could the elbow rule be obeyed if the left hand is grasping a sapling and the body is stretched out over the water to reach a rising trout with the fly? A down-stream fisherman who has adopted a regular style saves himself an enormous amount of labour, for this method of casting exacts less thought than up-stream and far less thought than across-stream casting. In down-stream fishing, too, a tug or a splash warns the angler of a rise; in up and across stream the fish, as he takes the fly without perhaps breaking the surface, must be seen more often than not to insure his being fairly hooked, at least if the dry fly be used.

Up-stream casting should begin at your own side of the stream

and all the water above you should be searched to the opposite bank.

There are some trout so placed that you can only hope to catch them by fishing with a dry fly straight across the stream, or rather about three feet above and below an imaginary line from yourself to the opposite bank. This is perhaps the very highest form of fly-fishing, and has the great advantage of enabling the angler to observe broadside on the action of the fish in rising.

For such casting the noiseless use of the top of the rod is essential, for a swishing flail-like action will never lay the dry fly-like thistledown on the water.

ACTION OF WRIST AND FINGERS JUST BEFORE LAYING THE LINE ON THE WATER
Dotted line perfect

The problem of perfect casting has by no means been solved; but the nearer the line from the reel to the fly approaches to one jointless weapon, stiff at the hand and tapering to the end fly, the better. We cannot make the line stiff enough at the hand, so we use a rod, and this ought to be so built and the line so suited to it that as near an approach as possible shall be made to the theoretically perfect weapon.

No good casting can be made if the line is allowed to fall too low behind the angler, and a salmon fly cannot be got out at all unless thrown well into the air behind, except of course in the Spey cast, which, however, need not at present occupy our attention. Both in driving a ball at golf and in casting a fly the

whole body from the feet to the tips of the fingers should be in play, and this we have seen perfectly exhibited by two brothers, professional golfers, with their drivers, and two brothers, schoolboys, with their rods, for from feet to club-head and fly their action was rhythmic in the highest degree. These four performers come especially to mind in golf and fishing, as in violin playing one splendid and graceful performer out of many rises up before us in the past.

Grace of action is generally the sign of health, strength, and early training, and is to be admired; but many have never had the opportunity to acquire a good style at the sport they have selected to follow, and yet are successful. We know that the best cricketer need not be the man with the best style; but a good style is always better than a bad one, and should therefore be diligently sought.

It is most difficult to express in words how the grip on the rod should be made, but, broadly speaking, good casting is an impossibility until the learner feels that the rod is part of himself, and until he is able to apply the greatest force with the least expenditure of energy, and this can only be done when wrist and fingers are thoroughly trained.

The steam hammer can strike the gentlest blow, and the most delicate work can only be done by the most powerful hands thoroughly trained to reserve their energy.

Violence is useless as a means of transmitting force with certainty, and in casting the economy of power can alone prove effective. The great thing to remember is that the point of the rod should never be far behind the back of the fisherman, and that to get the most work out of a rod its elasticity should be made full use of by the firm and gentle action of the wrist and fingers. Let this be acquired, and the rest of the body down to the toes will adapt itself to a good style.

Fishing is full of contradictions, and so a bad cast may get the biggest fish of the day. The line, after being freed from some obstacle, may be clumsily thrown on to the water in a heap with a splash; the fly sinks to the bottom, and the angler sets to work to reel up and prepare for a proper cast. But as the fly comes up with uneasy jerks through the water the big trout seizes it, and in a few minutes the delighted fisherman has him safe in the basket. It was a bad cast, no doubt, but it has taught the observant man how to make a new kind of killing cast, and, further, has opened his eyes to the fact that there are indeed many ways of casting a line.

A CYCLE TOUR IN SPAIN

BY CHARLES EDWARDES

My first afternoon on wheels in Spain yielded an alarming portent. I had come to Burgos by train from the north, entertaining many doubts about the state of the roads in the neighbourhood of the Pyrenees—doubts, by the way, which were quite dissolved. There was a strong north wind. It whistled through the bleak railway stations of the uplands, and raged among the picturesque rocks of Pancorbo. The weather was unsettled in other respects, with clouds and rain squalls as cold as the wind. The bare crimson and yellow plain of old Castille did not impress me as a field for the cyclist in search of enjoyment. I liked neither the harassed sallow faces of the country people, who, in considerable excitement, used the train, nor their rags, nor the fleas that proceeded from their rags and infested the cars and the station platform. It seemed ominous, moreover, that they should be selling water to the travellers at so much a glass. 'Who wants water?' was the cry that always first reached the ear when the train slowly halted. Not that the cycle loves wet roads; but I argued that if the land was poor in one respect it would be poor in others, and that there would be undesirable hardships attendant upon a cross-country jaunt through it.

At Burgos, however, there is no lack of creature comforts, though the city does stand nearly 3,000 feet above the sea. The Burgos 'flesh pots' encouraged me, if my fellow-guests at the Burgos hotel did not. These latter were genial Spanish bagmen, who found it a comforting change from the sale of dry goods, cottons and woollens, to discuss my plans. They discussed them in an exceedingly overt manner at table. On the whole, I

THE MULES HAD DARTED IRRESISTIBLY FROM THE ROAD

aroused their compassion. One of the waiting-maids caught this infection of pity, and, while serving me with the 'puchero,' put her hand on my shoulder and whispered something soothing. But I needed no man's pity, least of all if the wind held northerly. Even the antiquities of Burgos, enthralling though they are, were less to me than the north wind. That was why, on the night of my arrival here, I perambulated the Burgos cobbles in a state of elation. The clouds sped above me at a good many knots to the hour. And I was particularly pleased by the way the north wind took the skirts of a large elderly woman who chanced to be escorting a young lady to her home, and whisked them to her waist.

The next afternoon I started for Madrid, by no means unregarded, and it was about half an hour later that the calamity occurred which set me fearing I had made a mistake in attempting to cycle in Spain.

It was in this way. Having climbed the first ascent from the city to the uplands, I ran excellently with the wind full on my shoulders. There were many waggons and horsemen and assmen about, and my bell had much to do. But the bell was as forcible a terror to the mules and horses as the cycle itself. Some of the waggons had seven or eight mules to them, in single file. The commotion among these beasts was disturbing, even to me. I could not but sympathise with their drivers, yet what could I do more than I did? At last, with a crash, over went a large covered cart on its side—the mules had darted irresistibly from the road. The cries of women and the shouts of men told me what had happened, and I dismounted fifty yards ahead and viewed the troublous scene.

I avow I was not easy when I retraced my steps. The reddish field was strewn with household goods; two women were addressing the Virgin loudly; a girl was weeping and rubbing her head; and three men were looking from me to the prostrate vehicle, and from their prone struggling mules to the wreckage in the field. Fine swarthy fellows were these men, and their language excusable, if harsh. They did not assault me, as I expected. Together we worked, aided by the mules of another waggon. In half an hour the accident was no accident, and I had assuaged the girl's headache with a peseta. But it was a desperate half-hour's work, and I took to my cycle again somewhat dismally. If Spain's roads were to be prolific of such adventures, I could not be even tolerably sure of my life for a single day.

This was in the first twelve miles of the eight hundred or so that I ran ere I left Spain.

But it was the only real accident of my trip. Many a time I unhorsed a man or a woman—your Spaniard is so stolid a person that he quite declines to be disturbed even by a noisy bell taking him in the rear. Happily, though, as far as I could judge (and I made a point of being observant in such matters), no one was hurt. The ladies in particular bore these shocks very well. Either the amplitude of their clothing, or the ease with which they could drop upon their feet, saved them invariably from anything like personal injury. I had no time, and scarcely the inclination, to inquire about their outraged feelings.

The run from Burgos to Madrid was very interesting. Such old-world towns as Lerma, Aranda on the Douro, and Sepulveda are quite out of the moderately beaten track of tourists in Spain. The intervening villages of mud bricks cannot have altered much in appearance since the Moors retained a feeble grip of the land. A cyclist in the seventeenth century would not have startled these villagers more than I startled them in the year 1896. Whenever I halted in their midst for a trivial meal of eggs, salad, bread, and wine, I was compelled to hold a sort of *levée*, and reply to volleys of questions. The *alcalde* would be as inquisitive about my couple of wheels as the little boys fresh from school, and quite as apt at showing amazement as the picturesque old women squatting on their thresholds and twirling their distaffs in the good old-fashioned mode. Some of these ancient ladies considered both my cycle and me very ridiculous objects, nor were they backward in proclaiming their opinions. But I generally had the village notables on my side. In a serious, not to say reverential, tone, the mayor would utter wise words about the 'new' invention, and, as was right, his remarks were held to be oracles. His 'Vaya con Dios, caballero,' when I moved to depart, would be delivered like a benediction. Looking back from a distance of half a mile or so, I could see his worship and about half the village population still watching, *en masse*, the progress of their unusual visitor.

I had the north wind with me all the way to the Escorial. It even tried to help me up the irksome zigzags of the Guadarrama, among the hoar old pines, the mountain streams and flowers of which it behoved me to climb until I was about six thousand feet above sea-level. Though it was near the end of May, the snow still lay in patches on the bare summits of these hills, by no means remote from the top of the pass. I cannot say I

found the heat so vexatious as I expected. This, too, in spite of the glare from the treeless crimson and yellow plain, with the grasshoppers singing furiously among its thorny stunted shrubs and miserable burnt-up grain, sparsely studded with blood-red

'ROBBERS, CABALLERO'

poppies. The north wind was my salvation. It chanted a wild dirge on the telegraph wires, and kept me cool.

Some of the leagues were as lonely as lonely could be. The billowy uplands stretched on all sides, without house other than the white speck of a distant road-repairer's dwelling. A mournful

mortuary cross here and there by the roadside did not tend to enliven. I do not suppose the traveller in Spain hazards his dear life more than the traveller elsewhere; this, too, though I had been warned of the perils of the road in old Castille; yet I must say I did not care for these crosses.

'What is that one for?' I asked a roadman in one place.

'It is where a carriage was attacked and the gentleman killed,' was the reply.

Scarcely half an hour afterwards I inquired about another cross.

'Robbers, caballero,' answered my man gaily. 'Here two were overtaken and shot.'

It may, however, just as well be added that these crosses were tolerably mellow, and that when I questioned the *guardias civiles* on the subject, they had no doubt of the safety of the Spanish roads from north to south, and from Portugal to the Mediterranean.

The descent of the *sierras* to the Escorial was sensational. The road was in parts good and in parts rutty, thick with stones and newly mended. Such a state of affairs, on an incline continuous for miles, and with occasional very acute turnings, was at least warranted to keep one's faculties active. For one reason this rapidity of movement was a pity. The Guadarrama Sierras differ much on their two sides. To the north the glorious pine forests conceal their ruggedness. But the outline and face they offer to Madrid in the distance, and the Escorial nearer at hand, are savage and bold to the degree of forbidding. If ever mountains may be said to frown, these may on this side. There is a little excuse for them. The landscape beneath them to the south is not of the smiling kind, though I, for my part, enjoyed the sweet perfumes of the wild lavender and other herbs on its stony ground.

Madrid is not approached by the best of roads for the cyclist, and the nearer you get to the capital on its bleak, hot plateau, the worse the roads become. The traffic also is a formidable bar to pleasure. Oxen, mules, horses and equestrians pack the thoroughfare, with occasional flocks of bleating sheep and herds of thirsty cattle muddled among the creaking waggons. And then, the ruts! Or, if wet weather, the mud! The final climb to the entrance gate of your choice will be up a disagreeable straight paved avenue, a mile or more long.

Once in Spain's capital, however, there is abundance of scope for gentle wheel exercise in its pretty parks. Special tracks are

here reserved for bicyclists, and their goodness compensates in a measure for the badness of the city's thoroughfares. I will say little about the periodical cycle races held in this lofty capital. They arouse the Spanish mind to such enthusiasm that one is wont to think nothing but bull and cock fights can evoke from it. Madrid also has its cycle press. The 'most backward capital of Europe' does not mean to be sluggish in its devotion to 'wheels,' now that the infatuation has gripped it. Hitherto the cost of cycles in Spain has kept the pastime of cycling from becoming in the least degree popular with Spaniards. With the establishment of local factories, it seems probable that the *hidalgos* and moneyed classes of Madrid will lose their monopoly of the pleasure.

Very little experience and thought had thus early in my tour convinced me of one thing: to wit, the profit of being on the road betimes in the morning. The hours from six to eight were the most delightful of the day. It was both easy and comfortable to run five and twenty miles on the strength of the cup of chocolate that begins the Spanish day. An English breakfast would have been catastrophic. I am sure it would have dulled the senses a little to the enjoyment of the intense clear colours of the morning landscapes and the carolling of the birds ere the sun's heat forced them to be silent. It was also a matter for sincere congratulation if I could get the start of the procession of waggons which, sooner or later, was sure to leave one village for another. These waggons, with their quadrupeds and drivers, made the evenings at the country inns lively and picturesque.

From nine o'clock until twelve the pleasure of movement grew less and less, even with good roads and a kindly wind. From twelve to three or four there was more effort than pleasure in being afoot. This was the time when I could count on the drivers of the different wains being fast asleep on their goods. My bell had no effect on such sound sleepers, though it was sure to excite the somnolent mules. Again and again I then had to dismount for the public good. As a rule, however, I spent the hottest hours in some wayside *posada*, where the wine might be very good or bad, but where the welcome was always warm and the bill for dinner and accommodation always small. In Central Spain you do not find those enchanting chestnut woods which, in the north west, seem to cry out with invitations to cool repose. Here and there, however, in Castille (especially between Sepulveda and Segovia) are dark stretches of pines beneath which it was delightful enough to tarry for hot hours at a time, smoking and watching the hawks circling high over head, the magpies

and pigeons flitting from tree to tree. The blue distances of Castille's horizons—never short of mountains—were never bluer than when thus lazily viewed from beneath such dark fragrant cover.

I did not go farther south than Toledo. Fear of oppressive heat deterred me. Yet I think I might have set such fears aside after my experience of the Tagus valley between Toledo and Talavera, which, in its latest stage especially, yielded a succession of delightful kilometres. The road by which, in July 1809, General Cuesta trotted leisurely in his coach and six to give Wellington such aid as his army could (precious little at the best), and by which the French under Jourdan, Victor and Joseph the King retreated after the battle, is as good as any in Spain. Higher praise it could not have. The previous evening to my run into Talavera had been tempestuous. I had spent the night in St. Olalla, sitting, to my dinner of collops, salad and wine (with a double handful of huge cherries contributed by a pretty little girl of the house), on a low stool in the kitchen with about sixteen others, mulemen, the landlord and his family and domestics, all likewise dining. I had come quite to like this village during my hours of enforced sojourn in it, from about four o'clock in the afternoon. This, too, in spite of the trick played me by a brace of naughty schoolgirls. Roaming about the hamlet, I met these damsels swinging their black pigtails near a picturesque dilapidated porch. I inquired of them about a certain monastery I wished to see, and straightway they merrily led me up some stairs, rang a bell for me and departed briskly. An elderly lady was inside, in a goodly apartment which had nothing conventual about it. Though an antiquity, she was not the antiquity I sought. Hans Andersen, in his book about Spain, has said: 'There is something very charming and attractive to go from house to house, to peep in upon the family and become acquainted with the poetry of their daily life.' But from her manner, this old lady, at any rate, did not seem to think so.

However, the next morning broke at five o'clock into bright sunshine, and I was off before all the mulemen had even turned out of their hay beds between the wheels of their waggons. The mountains north kept their clouds for an hour or two longer; but it was good to see these gradually lift as I sped between the olive woods out into the open and rather barren red fields farther west. The poppies and bugloss among the grain and woods and vineyards were very bright. For miles I had a constant escort of strange birds, who flew before me, settling briefly on the telegraph

wires: pretty fellows, with yellow and bronze backs, black and white heads, long beaks and dark tails, about the size of starlings, with a cooing that was a dulcet variant upon the cuckoo's note. Magpies also were much in evidence, and enormous hawks high overhead. The final dozen kilometres were full in the plain of

A BURLY PRIEST ENTREATED ME TO ALLOW HIM TO TRY HIS LUCK ON MY CYCLE

the Tagus and the battlefield which made Wellington a peer, with olive trees as big as our average oaks on all sides, and the towers of Talavera in the distance. The heat here was certainly great, but it was tempered by a nice breeze, which, however, though it refreshed, did not keep the flies off.

A burly priest with a green sunshade and a very red face amused me just outside Talavera. He entreated me to allow him to try his luck on my cycle—having first, methought, looked shrewdly up and down the road to see that no parishioner was in sight. But after cross-examining him about his qualifications, I had with reluctance to beg him to excuse me from being so amiable. He had never yet been astride a bicycle saddle, he was distinctly ponderous, and I was far from my home, in a land where the cycle repairer is not for fifties of miles to be encountered. He took my hardness of heart with a very good grace; we shook hands and parted. 'What heat! what heat!' he remarked as he turned away, mopping his face. And yet it was in such heat, and worse, that our soldiers here made a forced march of forty miles, with half a hundred weight of baggage apiece on their backs!

From Plasencia to Corunna, a run of more than five hundred miles, confirmed me in my astonishment and satisfaction about Spain's roads. These are in themselves a lesson in history. They tell of the variety of civilisations this great and beautiful land has lived through, and especially of Spanish energy when Spain was the first Power of Europe. It was for the convenience of a monarch (not for the public good) that the costly thoroughfare from the palace town of La Granja, on one side of the Guadarramas, was constructed to the mausoleum town of Escorial, on the other side. The King said, 'Let the road be made,' and it was made. Of course the people paid the bill. But the road has, let us hope, recompensed their posterity for its first grievous cost. And though Spain may not in other respects nowadays maintain her credit, she keeps her main roads in a highly creditable state. Very welcome in the wilds are the stout little cottages of the roadmen at methodical intervals. They can always yield the wayfarer a jug of wine and a simple meal. And the workers themselves, with number 90 or number 1107 on their caps, are honest industrious fellows, as eager to help the stranger and wish him 'God speed' as to exchange an informing word or two with him.

The journey was just such a succession of easy runs and arduous climbs as was to be expected from such a country as Spain, where the mountains are sown with highly admirable disorder. The stage from Plasencia to Salamanca—130 kilometres—consisted in the main of a gradual grind to the pass of the Sierras de Gredos at Bejar, and a gradual descent thence to the old university city. Down in the Tagus valley the trees were laden

with apricots, palms flourished, and the mendicant with twopence-halfpenny in his pocket reckoned himself happy until nightfall if he could sit in a shady nook on a brown ruin, with his back against something. Midway, square miles of caroubs, with olive trees less and less frequent, and a good deal of wheat, marked the change in vegetation. While up by the zigzags of Baños, and higher still at Bejar, even the huge lovely chestnut trees were but just, in June, in comfortable leaf; and the wind from the snow, less than a thousand feet higher, provoked shivering.

In these uplands there was no temptation to enjoy *dolce far niente* unduly. The citizens of Bejar, almost to a man, on the Sunday I spent in their midst, wore their thick plush-lined cloaks as if it were December; and the country lasses, in town for the gaieties of a Sunday evening, were bright in parti-coloured woollen shawls and headgear. From the villages of the *sierras*, a succession of enthusiastic small boys broke forth upon me as I appeared, and were quite tearfully earnest in their cries of '*Monta, señor*,' if I happened to be in a pedestrian mood. Under the circumstances, more often than not, it here accorded both with my duty and inclination to oblige them.

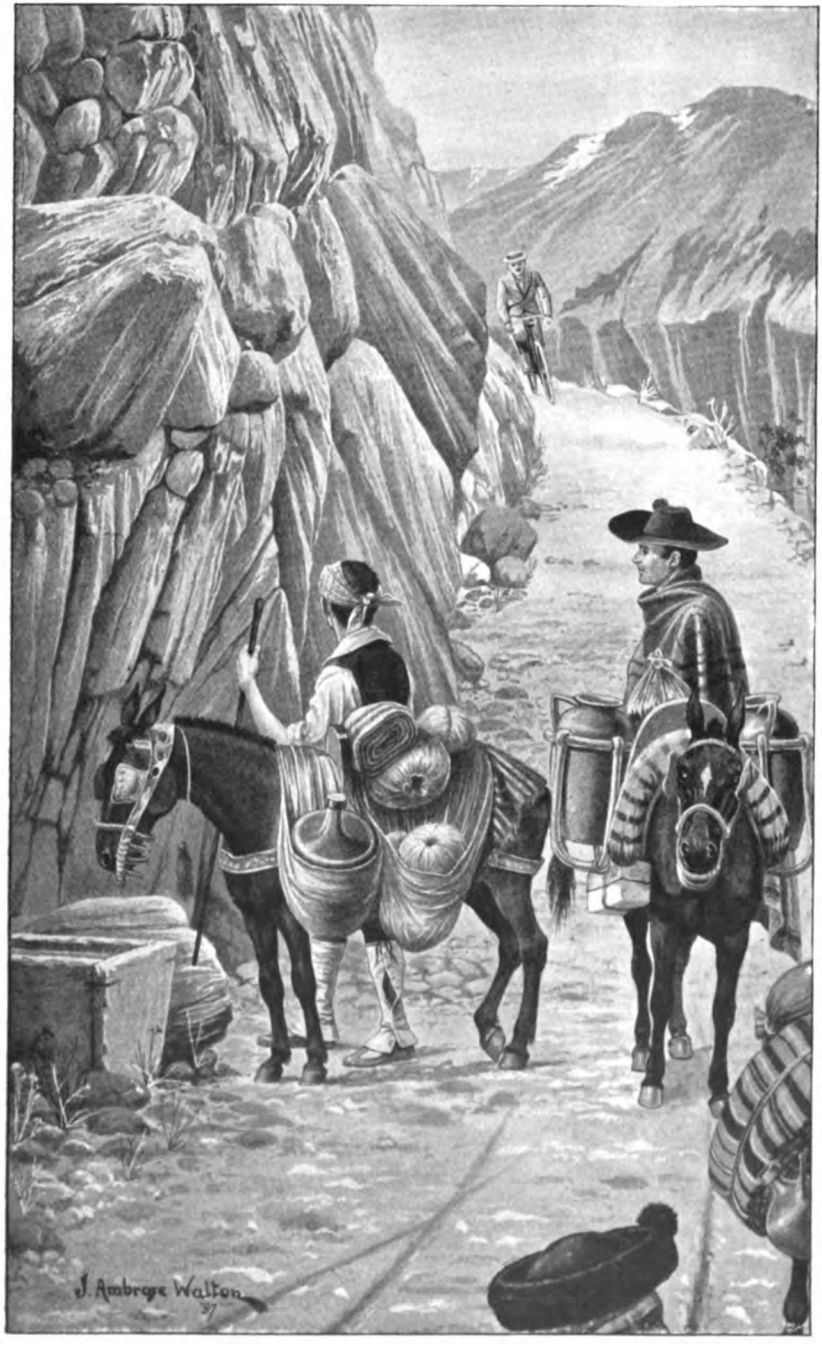
How different it was a week or two later, when I had got into the green valleys of Galicia, which seemed to hold the heat like ovens! I felt it most on the frontier of North Portugal. The little trip from Verin in Spain to Chaves in Portugal, in the valley of the Tamega, was sultry enough for anything. This road made its mark on my mind for its umbrageous, fruit-laden cherry trees. Excellent cherries they were! They cannot have been thus planted for the use of the public, but no one said me 'Nay' whenever I halted to take toll of them by the handful. A torrid fertile valley, the scene anciently of many a border fray, with purple mountains on either side, and blue-smocked men workers in the vines and maize fields. These showed the liveliest interest in my machine as I sped towards the bridge on the farther side of which Portugal began. The imbeciles in the custom house of Villa Verda made me, with impatience, even warmer than the weather ere I could get quit of them.

Distinctly Spain is not a land in which it is advisable to scorch on a cycle as well as under the local sun power. Yet such Spanish cyclists as I did clash with seemed anxious only to brag of the kilometres they could do in an hour. I didn't believe the tales they told in this respect. But I did believe the melancholy story related by a couple of amiable young women, in the café of Sepulveda, about a certain attorney of Madrid of their acquaintance,

who had rushed madly into the town one morning, and rushed madly back to Madrid in the afternoon. 'By the following Friday, señor, he was dead!' they declared. I am not vain enough to fancy they gave such serious emphasis to their words in order to keep me in their father's hotel an hour or two longer than I proposed. But they certainly impressed me by their manner.

The only occasions when I did let myself go were after the long spell of tramping necessitated by some of the mountains—for example, after the 12-kilometre ascent of the pass by Lubian; again, the next day, when, after ascending two or three thousand feet, I had to drop from a second pass; in the Guadarramas down to the Escorial; and especially after an interminable grind between Verin and Ginzo in Galicia, when I had been rising on foot for a couple of melting hours, and had come to the watershed among fantastic grey rocks with glorious masses of yellow broom about them. Some of these spins were little short of thrilling, as may be supposed. But the cyclist in Spain soon comes to have entire faith in the constructors of the roads. These maintain a uniform gradient which is never what we should call steep. I found nothing in the little Alfonso's land to compare for awkwardness with the road between Haverfordwest and St. David's, where the hills are taken with heroic directness well calculated to break necks. In Spain, if there is an abrupt descent into a valley, the zigzags are numerous. If the descent is less abrupt, the zigzags are less numerous. That is all. Once having learnt the knack of negotiating with grace and nerve the very sharp turns of these mountain roads, the cyclist here may put on steam. Of course, however, only on one condition, that he have his brake ready for use if he requires it. Otherwise, there will assuredly be disaster sooner or later; for the mules and bullocks of the highlands sometimes monopolise all the road's breadth, and at all times it is well to be on the alert, when passing them, lest either you or they be rushed in a panic clear over the rocks on the exposed side of the thoroughfare.

Lubian, in the mountains between the provinces of Zamora and Orense, gave me my most sensational night, even as it was the sequel to one memorably enjoyable day and the prelude to another. This little town is about four thousand feet above sea level, accessible only by the passes I have mentioned. How my machine did run away with me, to be sure, as I made for its welcome roofs, with the great oaks and chestnuts of the woods close above and below them! Streams roared from the heights down the heather-clad rocks, carried under the road with the



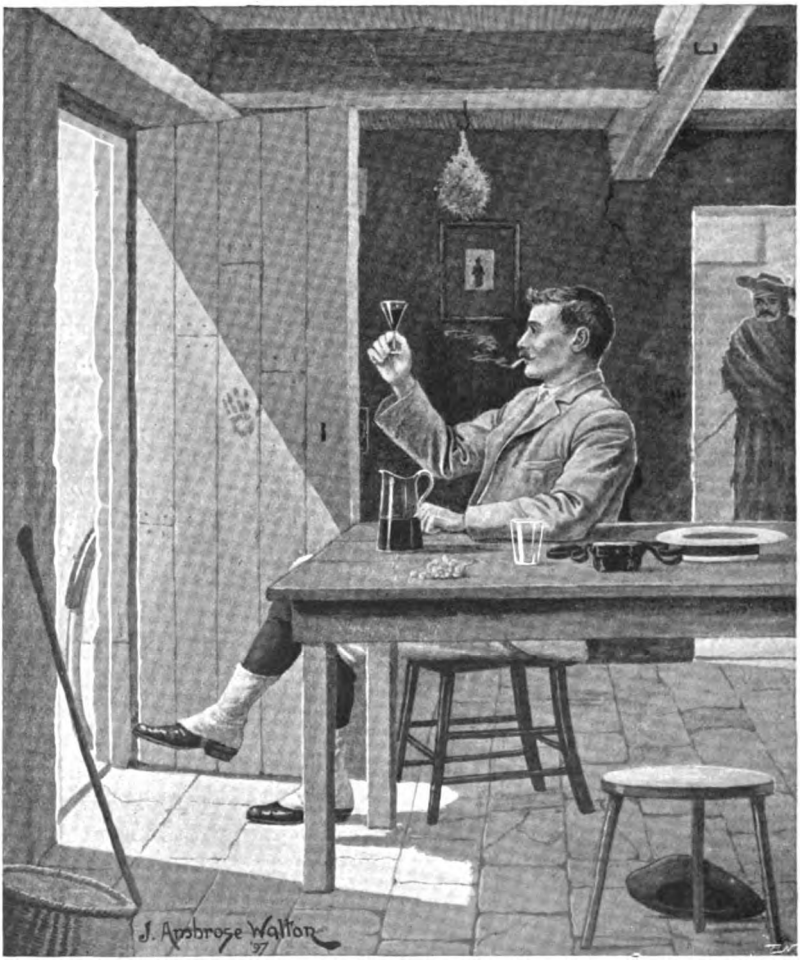
SOME OF THESE SPINS WERE LITTLE SHORT OF THRILLING

ingenuity and grace customary in Spain. It was a scene of enchantment. I cannot say, however, that the Lubian inn was worthy of such a place. It behoved me to take pot luck by the small wood fire in the kitchen, with dogs and cats, an assortment of inquisitive villagers (whose questions were of the stereotyped kind, so that I could almost have satisfied them without hearing a word they said), a couple of delicate but beautiful little fawns, and an extraordinary number of insects. To the question I soon felt 'impelled' to ask, 'Are there any fleas here?' the answer came pat. '*Si, señor*, with so many beasts about how should it not be so?'

The cold here was really keen. The white rime on the grass when I started the next morning was no surprise to me. Ere then, however, I had spent a rather curious night in a rough dirty old common upper room with four beds in it, not all screened by curtains. There was a baby, and it cried. In the dead hours I woke and heard footsteps, and called out to know the time. And in reply the sad-eyed but pretty girl of the house had come to my bedside with a lighted candle and gazed upon me interrogatively. It was half-past two, she said, and with what could she oblige me? At three the cocks in the room below began to crow strenuously, and an hour later a caged blackbird joined in. By then, too, the dolorous creaking of the rustic ox carts outside told me that the Spanish peasant's working day had opened. As I had had quite enough of the Lubian fleas I also rose, and was off soon after five, when the mountain tops had lost their dawn crimson and apparelled themselves in cloth of gold.

The fare in this inn was better than the accommodation. With a dinner of soup, trout, ham and eggs, pastry, the excellent white wine of Rueda, followed by coffee and cognac, no traveller in Spain, least of all a cyclist (to whom good appetite is assured), should find fault. I paid my bill of a dollar here gratefully enough, and forgot the fleas and the unrestful night. The *chica* curtseyed in acknowledgment of her gratuity, and she and her mother wished me a God-guided journey with quite affecting tenderness. This, however, is the rule in the country parts of Spain. If you will but let them serve you when they please, and be content if they do their best, nowhere in the world will you meet with more agreeable courtesy. There was not a cycling day in all the thirty I spent in the Peninsula that did not yield abundance of incident and interest. Even my worst morning, when I sped, sopped, into Salamanca, and aroused the compassion (wasted) of a large company of song-singing students assembled

in the hotel, had had its good hours ere the rain set in solidly over the arid treeless red plateau, from a dimple in which the old city proudly lifts its chocolate-coloured towers and dilapidated walls, and ushered in an afternoon and evening of such sight-seeing as



A PINT OF WINE GENERALLY SET THE MIND ON A NEW TACK

made me forget that I was mainly attired in borrowed clothes of a rather unbecoming cut. There were of course times when fatigue got the upper hand and took the heart out of enthusiasm. But these times were brief. A halt of an hour in the meanest roadside *venta* (with two or three black-browed ruffians cooking red offal

for their midday meal) and a pint of wine generally set the mind on a new tack. And everywhere the air, wet or dry, was an even better tonic for jaded hopes than the wine, good as this might be.

I repeat, I did not scorch. But one morning I managed my seventy kilometres, up and down mountains, between the cup of chocolate at sunrise and the midday meal. They were courteous enough at the town where I reposed for three or four hours to assemble and lavish compliments upon me. There was a number of wealthy and stout old gentlemen in the club whither I was led against my inclinations, and these persons gave up their dominoes and cards and encircled me in an embrace of admiration that was almost embarrassing. As a rule, I do not fancy the Spaniard is much given to hospitality; but these club men would have deluged me with beverages. They were unanimous in terming me *muy valiente*, though I doubt not, in their sage old hearts, they thought me *muy loco*. Really, upon review of that morning's work (the mere mileage of which tells little of it), I do not know to which of these judgments I had the better claim.

At Orense, again, where the majestic Minho sweeps under a bridge that, like others in Spain, is one of the devil's own (so audacious is it!), the hotel landlord was much distressed because I declined the honour of being interviewed. I much preferred the mellow cathedral and other antiquities of this fascinating, slow old town, to a series of editorial questions, though perhaps it was churlish of me, seeing that the provincial press of Spain is ordinarily the dullest of the dull.

Vigo, Pontevedra, Santiago, and Corunna brought me to my bourne, through a succession of final landscapes that had lost grandeur only to gain in pastoral beauty that was homelier to an Englishman. Of other interests in this north-west corner of Spain there were, of course, many; from the tomb of Sir John Moore, now embosomed in a small but pretty public flower garden, to the historic shrine of St. James of Compostella, which still, I am told, works miracles.

In conclusion, I would fain moralise in observing that life's best pleasures cost little, and that it is only the second and third grade joys that are expensive. The cyclist in Spain, for example, though but slightly endowed with Spanish and the knack of adapting himself to his environment, need spend no more than five shillings a day on his pastime. And this, I warrant him, will give him as much pleasure as he can reflect upon for a few years in his time of the sere and yellow leaf, and stiff joints.

A DAY WITH A NORFOLK GUNNER

BY C. J. CORNISH

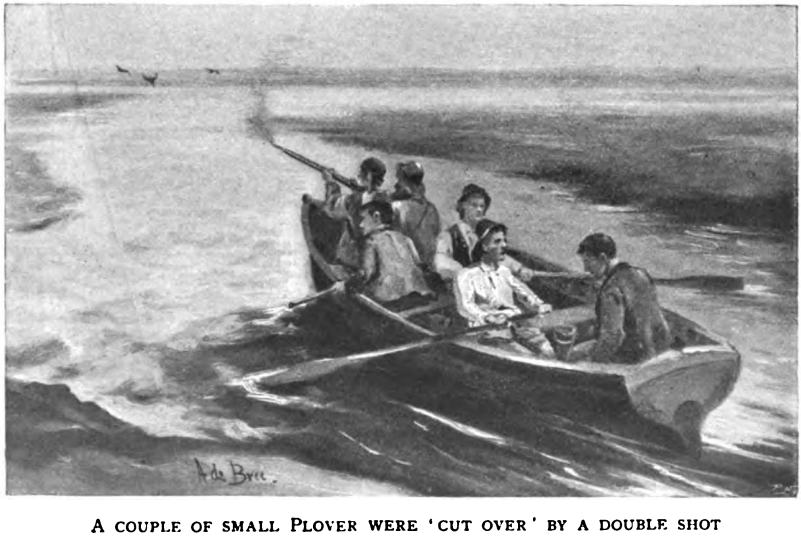
UNDER the title of 'Nights with an Old Gunner' the writer gave, in the BADMINTON MAGAZINE for January last, some details of the mixed results of sport and observation, especially at night, by one of the veteran gunners of the Norfolk coast. Our object at the time was to kill some of the wild grey geese of Wells Harbour. But our sport was not confined to morning and evening expeditions to intercept the geese. Among other activities it was proposed that we should try a day's rabbiting and rough shooting in the sand hills, with the old gunner as guide and mentor, to provide sport and anecdote.

We met our old friend at the quay, and found that he intended us to go to the sand hills not by land, but by water. A son—a good-looking young fellow of eighteen—and a son-in-law were to pull us up the various creeks for about a mile and a half, and drop us at the back of the 'hills.' In addition was the ferreter, with his bag of ferrets and nets. The old man had his gun, glistening with oil, long boots, and his 'side bag,' as he calls a canvas and oilskin wallet, into which he stuffs anything portable, from a wild goose to a box of matches. The sons had perforated boxes, spades, and pails. These, we found, were for digging up and bringing home lug-worms, which are sold at two shillings per hundred as bait to fishing-boats bound for the North Sea. 'Slow trade, worming,' remarked our old friend; 'but sometimes you happen on cur'ous things when you're arter 'em, or coming home from cockling. I recollect I was coming back

from worming one day, when I come on a fish a'most as broad as that was long: that lay on the side like a great hog. "Why, Lord bless my heart alive," I said, "if this ain't a sun-fish!" And so that was. That didn't look no good to eat, and that was a bit smelly. However, some o' the old women who was comen' home from cocklin', they had a slice or two off it.'

Wondering how the sun-fish 'fillets' were cooked, we shoved off and rowed up the creek among the flats of sea-lavender and crab-grass, the water and smooth banks of mud shining in the morning sun, keeping a look-out for any birds that might rise as we turned the many corners and windings.

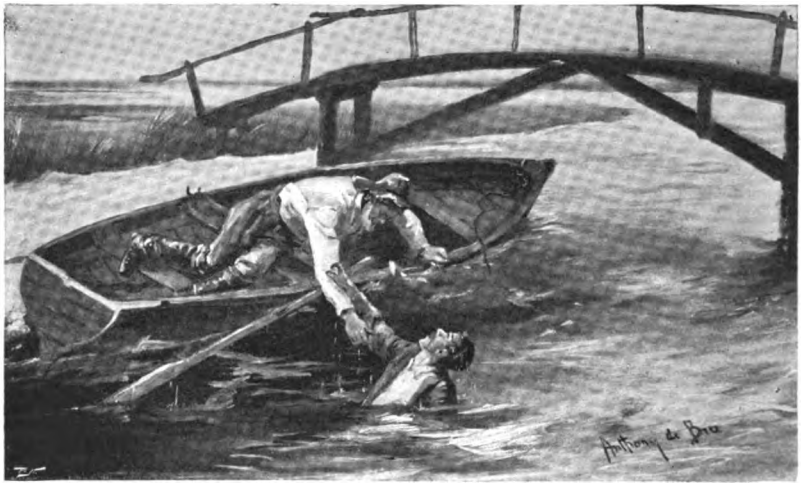
A couple of small plover came dashing down the stream at a great ppace, and were 'cut over' by a double shot from the bows of the boat. Round another corner some red-shanks rose, and were missed; but almost immediately after a flock of green plover came drifting across, and left three of their number on the crab-grass of the marsh. These we picked up, after finding a suitable landing-place, and then amused ourselves by trying to work up to a company of grey crows, which were eating mussels on an old wooden bridge across the creek. The crows sat like vultures



A COUPLE OF SMALL PLOVER WERE 'CUT OVER' BY A DOUBLE SHOT

on the rail, croaking and cracking the shell-fish, which they kept fetching from an abandoned mussel bed up the creek; but they knew as well as we did what was intended, and flew off before we were in shot.

'I'm allus glad when I get past that bridge when the crick is full and we're afloat,' remarked our guide. 'I was going up in a punt with a two-bladed paddle, and a gentleman with me. Well, nothing would suit him but *he* must take the paddle. It



HE GRABBED AHOLD, AND PULLED ME OUT

was no use my talking, so all I said was, "When you come under a bridge that lay about a quarter of a mile up furder, do you take care the tide don't tarn yar punt's bow round against the piles, and do you mind you don't catch yar paddle against 'em either, or oover yow'll goo." "All right," he says, and he steps in and sets off as hard as he could paddle. However, when we come to the bridge he gave the paddle to me. And if you'll belive it I took and hit the paddle against the bridge, and we was overset. When we come up he was holding on to one of the crosspieces of the bridge. He was all right there, and I hollered to him to keep where he was, when, blame me! the cross-piece that took and broke, and he was under in a minute. He bobbed up just by me, and I reached out my hand. He grabbed ahold, and, my heart! he did lay of me—one hand in my collar, another on my arm; and of course down we went to the bottom of the crick. That was ten feet deep, tide running fast, and nothing but mud to catch ho'd on when you come up. We went under again, and I was a'most done, when we washed against a shallow, and I got my heels in the mud, and then my head out of the water. I pulled him out too, and laid him on the bank; but

he was so freezing cold he would have laid down and slept where he was, but I got him across the marshes, and down to the quay. When we got there, there was no one to put us across, but at last an old woman heard the hollering and rowed a boat over to fetch us. I had about a pint of brandy, and next morning I was no worse; and what is more, I fished up the guns.'

At this point our craft 'appulsed' on a slope of the creek shore, and we got out to walk across the meal marshes to the sand hills. Only the ferreter came with us, and he had no gun. Our old friend remarked that he had had an accident, and 'didn't use to carry a gun no more.' I believe, as a matter of fact, it was some one else who 'had the accident,' but it was the ferreter who had the gun.

We walked in line across a curious, half-formed land, studded with little juniper bushes, between which, in the wet parts, was samphire growing, and, in the driest bits, masses of sea-lavender like heather. There were also winding creeks, just like Scotch burns, only salt, and with thicker sea-lavender by their sides, as heather grows by the burns on the moors. Here we rose a covey or two of partridges—*Perdrix maritimus* we named them, for at high tides they had only a strip of sand hill to live on, and there was not a genuine land plant or seed for them to feed on on the whole marsh.

We flushed a number of stints and red-shanks also, but these were too wild to approach. But the rabbiting was excellent. Ferreting is usually a dull business. Unless the rabbits are in a very 'bolting' humour, it is slow; and they cannot, as a rule, be hurried. But in the light sand of the 'hills,' with no roots and bushes, and nothing more difficult than the marram grass to stop digging if digging be necessary, very good, quick ferrets, and men handy with the spade, one gets on fast. Then the place was new, and the whole scene amusing. Our campaign was on the inner side of the 'hills,' and I own to have had my doubts as to whether we should have much sport. We began by trying a piece of ground forty yards square, covered with shortish grass, with no great number of holes. But the ferrets went in eagerly, and before our old gunner could give us even a word of good advice, of which he had plenty at hand, a couple of rabbits dashed out, and, almost before they were fired at, dived into a hole again. We saw we must shoot quick, and so next time shot much too quickly, and 'smashed' our bunnies. Then we shot one or two scientifically, as they were good enough to make a rush for the big hills, and gave a nice shot.

Our next venture was in a line of minor hillocks—a kind of miniature range of mountains, none of them more than six or seven feet high. There were two or three rabbits in each hill. It was impossible to guess which way they would bolt; the sand was absolutely noiseless to their feet, and, in addition, there was a high wind. Standing on the hillocks, and wishing we had eyes in the backs of our heads, we waited, shot, and laughed or applauded as we alternately missed or hit our bunnies.

One needs to be in cover to take rabbiting seriously. They were growing abnormally sharp, for those in the nearest 'hills' found out what was going on, and one would occasionally slip out and race across the samphire and between the shingle banks,

WE SAW WE MUST SHOOT QUICK

greatly pursued by shot and shouts. One or two neat right and left gave us some satisfaction; but it was not an exhibition of finished shooting. Having bagged fifteen rabbits we decided on trying to drive the coveys of partridges we had sent on to the hills. These wild and lawless birds, which have deserted the comfortable fields of Wells and Stiffkey for this storm-beaten, sea-eaten strip of sand, are about as wild as the wild geese. But of course our old gunner had a plan, and equally of course it was a good one.

The birds like to fly along the line of hills when flushed parallel with the sea; and we, the two guns who were to share this highly sporting 'drive,' arranged ourselves, one on the seaward, the other on the landward side of the hills, after making a

solemn compact that neither would poke his head over the top to ask questions, and so run the risk of making his companion a homicide, by getting his head blown off if the birds came past at that juncture. My lot gave me the inside place, and while watching the men cut across the level base of the curve of hills I saw a flock of the grey geese coming out from the fields to the east of Wells. There were eleven of them, and their line was just pointing to where I was hidden, nor did they appear to be very high, for the wind was against them. But they saw the men, swerved, crossing the hills 200 yards to the west, and going far out to where the point of the High Sand just showed above the flood tide. Presently the men flushed one covey of birds,

MY LOT GAVE ME THE INSIDE PLACE

which instead of coming on made inland for the marsh. The smaller covey came on following the curve of the hills, and gave a good chance which was missed, as the birds almost touched the top of a sand hill. The others pitched behind us, and we had a chase among and round the sand mounds, which the birds cleverly put between us and them before rising. Being used to shooting red-legs in the snow I tracked them in the sand, but they were too quick, and all flew on and pitched one after another in some black marram at some distance along the hills. We followed, and walking carefully through the cover flushed five, and bagged a brace—very dark-coloured, but large birds.

By luncheon we had a brace of partridges and fifteen rabbits.

While the meal was proceeding under shelter of a steep sand hill on the side of a breach formerly made by the sea through the centre of the hills, reminiscences of the sport and natural history of the place, and the curious life of the gunners and fishermen who make up a large percentage of its population, were the natural staple of conversation. The great sporting estate of Holkham is close by, and its owner is universally popular among all classes in the neighbourhood. Some years ago a curious form of poaching was attempted, to which the writer does not remember to have heard a parallel. A 'gentleman,' accompanied by his wife and two friends, drove up to one of the local inns, early in September, and asked for rooms. They had a pair of horses, a waggonette, and some luggage following them by train, while there were three gun cases in the carriage. The morning after they arrived the three men hired a boat, and taking their guns sailed round to the eastward. There they landed on the shore, and proceeded to beat some fields of turnips and standing barley, where they bagged a good many brace of birds and several hares. The impudence of the proceeding prevented the farm-labourers from asking any questions, and when the keeper came on the scene they were already in their boat, and sailing back to their quarters. Next day was Sunday, and the party amused themselves by shooting along the shore. Sunday shooting is properly considered *infra dig.* by the native gunners, and the story of these people's piratical expedition of the day before being known, a watch was kept when they set off at daybreak next morning in a boat which they had hired for the purpose. It was clear that they meant to make a raid on the preserved sand hills at Holkham, and a loyal neighbour at Wells rode over by a short cut, and warned the keeper, whose beat included the sand hills, of what he suspected. The surmise was correct. Hidden in the pines on the top of the hills they watched the boat approach and ground upon the sand.

One adventurer remained in the boat, with a flag on a stick. The other two went straight up into the sand hills, and began to shoot at the hares and rabbits, which were very numerous. The keeper and his ally, after witnessing the death of a brace of hares, ran out, and got between the raiders and their boat, when the flag was waved by the third man, and the boat shoved off into water about four feet deep. The two 'gentleman poachers' ran out, and made, not for the boat but for the sea, into which they walked till up to their knees, and then shouted to the keeper that they were below high-water mark, and that he had no power to

RUSHING INTO THE WATER HE SEIZED ONE MAN BY THE COLLAR

meddle with them. The keeper's ally, who was quite as good a 'lawyer' as the raiders, begged him on no account to touch the men, but to demand their names and addresses. He also pointed out to the poachers that they had been seen to kill the hares, and that their address was known, so that they had better give up their names and depart. An insolent reply made the keeper lose his temper, and rushing into the water he seized one man by the collar, and with the other hand grasped his gun. That is the kind of thing which leads to poaching homicide; the gun was instantly swung round, and the muzzle driven against the keeper's abdomen. It did not go off, and the men were allowed to get into their boat; after which they were in due course summoned and fined. 'The fine was cheerfully paid,' as the newspaper reports say, and so this curious instance of well-to-do law-breaking closed.

We were watching a gunner squatted in a 'duck-hole' by the side of a wide creek, up which several curlew were flying as the flood-tide covered the last mud banks of the harbour. Presently he fired and bagged his bird, a single one which was flapping past his hiding-place. We asked what was the best sport remembered to have been had from one of these uncomfortable hiding-places, and the answer was 'nine duck,' in a gale, at flood tide, during a frost. No great encouragement, so far as bagging fowl goes. In the afternoon we began rabbiting again, and though they did not bolt so freely as in the morning, we had enough sport to keep us interested. We attempted to storm a big sand hill covered with scrubby elder bushes, the nearest approach to land vegetation among the hills. The warren was too large, and though we bolted a few bunnies, the rest only went deep down into the hill, where it was hopeless to reach them. One year a ferret was put down on this hill to select a hole, and instantly diving down the nearest one, caught something which struggled hard not far down the bury. The ferret was hauled out by the line, and was found to have its teeth fast in a woodcock!

Near an embanked creek at some distance we bolted several rabbits, and bagged three; but the thick junipers on the bank made shooting difficult. Our old guide had a 'grand rabbit shoot' here one August. A high tide had come up suddenly, when all the young half-grown and three-quarter-grown rabbits were disporting themselves on the dry marsh, a quarter of a mile from their stronghold on the 'hills.' Unable to get back, they all crowded on to the embankment by the creek, and there were

discovered by the old gunner, who was then acting as 'rabbiter' for the tenant of the hills, and shot forty with very little trouble —not a bad afternoon's bag for one gun. We were less successful, but our total bag amounted to twenty-five rabbits and two partridges, with which we loaded up the boat, and after picking up those of the original crew who had gone 'worming,' and were now, like the curlews, driven off the sands by the tide, we dropped down the creek towards the town. It was suggested that we might wait lower down the creek for the 'flight'—to wait for the flight, even when there is very little chance of sport, being deemed part of the whole duty of man at Wells. Our stand was by some pools adjoining the creek, divided by low banks, and near to several favourite feeding-places of mallard and widgeon. These birds had been coming in so late at night that there was very little chance of a shot. But it is always interesting to see night cover the marsh, and to me a somewhat new experience. As dusk came on, the notes of plover, red-shank, and stints were heard all round us, and we soon began to fire at quick dim forms dashing past us. The stints were hardly worth shooting at, but gave capital practice, and we bagged several green plover and a red-shank. Then to our surprise a whole rush of duck came high overhead, followed by three which to a practised flight shot would have offered an excellent chance. Not having a 'duck eye' I missed them, and our old gunner could only revenge himself by creeping down the side of a pool and getting a 'stram' at a lot of stints, of which he picked up half a dozen.

Then we followed our leader across a path well known to him, bringing us to the firm marsh opposite the quay. There we found some of the family waiting with the boat, and were duly ferried across the stream to the steps. Our old gunner's parlour looked bright and happy enough by the light of a good paraffin lamp. The girls were getting tea ready, and by the fireplace hung the body of a big merganser, which had been so unfortunate as to come up the creek in our absence. One of the girls, who gave us a cup of tea before we left for the hotel, had been the second person pulled out of the water by her father in one afternoon. He had changed his fishing clothes, and was going up to the bowling-green, when there was a shouting and screaming outside, which is the quay-side equivalent to 'Man overboard!' at sea, or 'Fire!' in the London streets. He ran out and saw a child in the water, and was just in time to jump in and rescue her. She was floating face downwards, and it was not until he got her ashore that he found it was his own child. She had been

paddling her feet over the quay at high water, and knocked one of her shoes in; then, reaching for the shoe, had fallen in herself.

It was not till seven o'clock that we left the old gunner's cottage for the hotel, and even as we walked along the quay the signs and tokens of sport accompanied us. The wind had fallen, and the harbour-side was deserted, when overhead came a rushing sound like a gale of wind. It was the great mass of ducks from Holkham Lake flying over the town, safe and invisible in the darkness, on their way to their feeding grounds in the eastern marsh.

OUR DAY ON THE BROADS

BY THE REV. GEORGE PRESTON

It was Cyril's idea. We were breakfasting under the chestnut tree when he suggested that the day was perfection for a water party, and that the Broads were within easy reach. As Bradshaw showed that we had barely half an hour in which to make all preparations and drive down to the train, everyone was eager to go. Belinda gave orders for the luncheon and saw it packed, smartly refusing all offers of assistance from the Worm. 'You may get the claret if you like' was all the concession that she made.

Now the Worm being the only one of the party who knew their destination or the route by which to reach it, or the delicate intricacies regarding tickets in that particular expedition, was much hampered by the multitudinous, explicit and emphatic directions of those who had never been in Norfolk in their lives till a week ago.

But at last the company detrained at a station from which could be caught glimpses of many white sails, clumps of masts, and a small flotilla of skiffs.

'What boats shall we take?' And here the first trouble began. Cyril and Druce want to sail; Belinda and Muriel probably do, as they declare that they do not; the Worm pronounces for a row-boat that would give him some exercise—selfish as usual—

so he sculls them away in a craft so comfortable that they have no fault to find with anything in it, except the sculler.

'How inconsiderate of those boys to take a boat all to themselves! and one that would only hold themselves,' and Belinda at the thought grows angry with the remnant left her, who was pulling with a strong and steady stroke, half in a dream, recalling his days on the Cam, and wondering why he had bartered the freedom of the old life to become the slave of a woman who seldom failed to narrate her views, but now and then broke into a smile that swiftly cleared away from his brow the cloud of even righteous indignation.

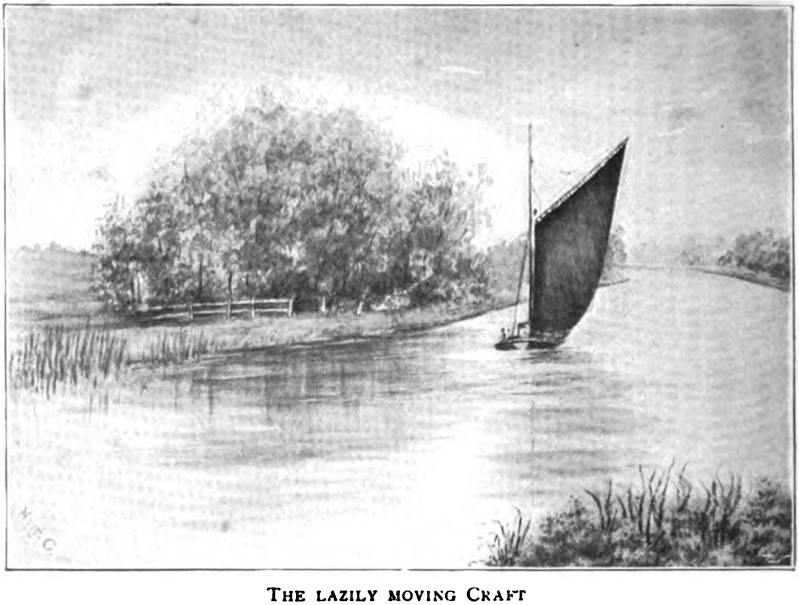
Down the scarcely flowing river they float, under the curtseying willows and crumpled-leaved alders, past the flickering whispering reed-beds, along banks rich with clusters of purple loose-strife and heavy-scented meadow-sweet, here and there with a peep of overshadowed backwater, till one seems to be back again at Clifton Hampden or under Baselden Woods. To keep up the illusion here in the main channel is a steamer, only that it pays more consideration to unassuming row-boats than ever did that hateful 'Bunbury Belle.'

At last comes into view the wider broad. Ah! here is a strange craft, not seen on the Thames reaches, a Norfolk wherry, and very pretty she looks, though so large and clumsy, with her gay if startling colours, her huge expanse of sail, her red pennant fluttering in the breeze, with her roomy, comfortable cabins, as cosy as those of any house-boat, and so much more like a real ship. Here you may play at yachting, and dress up to the part if dress pleases you, without any fear of *mal de mer*, or of the usual marine discomforts, or of great rough rollers fresh from their wild game in the Atlantic, tumbling in over the bulwarks, with a freedom that looks so sportive but is so abominably intrusive and unwelcome.

The Broads have characteristics of their own, different from those of any other river or lake paradise in this land, different from either the River of Pleasure or that famous stretch of the Dee from Chester to Eaton, or the mountain-ringed meres in the North-west, so fresh—if only it does not rain—with their bright pellucid air. The fascinating pictures that are displayed beneath the racks on the Great Eastern Railway carriages do not show any greater embellishment of nature than may be allowed as the legitimate privilege of art.

To be sure there are no features like the jagged crests that environ Windermere or Ulleswater; you may not see the velvet

lawns and towering trees of Eccleston, nor the wooded slopes of Cliefden; but there is something delightfully fresh and simple in these quiet lagoons and the streamless channels that unite them. One is here more alone with nature. Not that there are not plenty of human beings moving about; but those who come from afar take their pleasure quietly and indolently, as if they had imbibed the peaceful nature of the calm surface over which they float, and grow to be as slow in their movements as the tardy-limbed men who manage the lazily moving craft. And since there is little rise and fall in the level of the land there is scarcely any current and there are no locks. Now, though the passage through



THE LAZILY MOVING CRAFT

'Boulter's' or the like has an interest of its own, it is an interest that palls, and, alas! so many hissing steamers, arrogant electric launches, and row-boats full of crews and passengers either painfully spick and span in their attire, or laden with ill-suppressed or even aggressive rowdyism, that one can never there be rid of the idea of town. Here you drive your boat's prow into a reed bed, and at once have passed into another state of existence, 'the world forgetting, by the world forgot.' The lowing of kine, the cawing of the rooks in the elms by yonder farm, the cry of the startled waterfowl, and, if it be not too late in the summer, the music of the honey-voiced throstle, with now and then the faint call of the

A CAPITAL NOOK.

sailor men mellowed by distance, all combine to make a melodious harmony of lullaby to set your soul at rest, as you lie in the bows and watch the flock of wild pigeons, or follow the solitary heron rowing his course with slowly flapping wings through the clear azure far overhead, or mark the wood smoke of a distant cottage rising blue against the dark background of oak or elm leaves that hang motionless in the unruffled calm of the afternoon. Surely it is both pleasant and good for a while to be a Lotus-Eater.

'Easy all; let us stay awhile to watch those men fishing.'

'I've seen hundreds of men sitting on the bank, or in a boat, but have never seen anyone catch anything.'

'Nor have I, and what's more, I don't believe any of them ever do catch anything.'

'Then what are those records in the "Field," "Land and Water," and all the fishing gazettes?'

'Oh, those are different; but I don't believe all those either. Fishermen, as a class, are Cretans.'

'Well, here is your exception; he has hold of something—a big one. What on earth is it that he is lugging out? Is it a turbot or a pair of bellows?'

'Oh, that's a barbel; see, the other man has hooked another. Anyhow, I hope I shall never be asked to eat such a coarse-looking creature as that is.'

'They won't catch any more; I suppose that excitement will suffice them for this week. Row on, lazy.'

'Ah, that corner by the willow will make a capital nook for us to lunch in, and there are those boys. Oh, you've come at last, have you; wanted lunch, I suppose? Well, moor your bark alongside. Oh dear, how clumsy you are, Worm! Why don't you ship your sculls with the blade to the bow, as I've told you so often? *Do* bring out that luncheon basket, we are ravenously hungry, and even more thirsty, though we loaded the boat with a cargo of cherries and strawberries at those shops near the station. What have we here?—lobster, chicken, tongue, sandwiches of ham, marmalade, cheese—ugh—cake! Where's the claret? Oh, here, and the glasses—where are those glasses? Worm, how is this? You don't mean to say—— What? *Never asked you!* When I told you to find the claret, of course I thought you would at least have the sense to bring something to drink it from. *Wouldn't let you speak when you wanted to ask about them!* It was just like you, always chattering when one is engaged. Oh, what stupid things men are, and one's husband always the stupidest of all!'

The Worm suggests that Cyril or Druce should row the dinghy across to a farm, visible near one of the inlets in the Broad, and hire, beg, borrow, or steal some tumblers. While they are absent on this errand, Muriel extemporises a fishing-rod from her sunshade handle, and a line from six strands of a silk parasol tassel. The Worm discovers a much-frayed 'March Brown' in his cap, and baits it with a morsel of tongue from a sandwich. By the time they have landed and returned to the water two sweet little fish, tiny orange-eyed, scarlet-finned baby roach, the lunch draws to its natural strawberry-and-cream conclusion.

'Would madame like a sail?' ask Cyril and Druce. Belinda, piqued at not having been asked originally at the boat-house, declines, much against her will. Muriel, wiser in her generation, accepts the offer, and off start the three.

Belinda looks dissatisfied, but for awhile successfully disguises her discontent. Poor Belinda, how hard on you, that because you are twenty-five, and they only twenty, they should so inconsiderately fancy your husband good enough company for you! A dim idea to the same effect strikes the Worm, conscious of his dozen years' seniority, and with his usual blundering tactless sympathy he tries to apply balm to the wound by the offer of a cigarette. Belinda speaks not, but 'No, thank you,' is the answer written in her disgusted frown. Belinda does not always frown at a cigarette, but what can she say to a husband who is so brutal as to observe her gloomy look? Then tears. At last the Worm is annoyed, and says so. '*Childish! you* call it childish, who never know your own mind for two hours together! May not one have the l—luxury of a t—tear, t—tied to such a fiend as you? Oh, why did I ever marry you?'

'The Lord knows,' half mutters the Worm to himself. Then, aloud, 'I know I'm not a good person——'

'*You* a good person! Of course you're not; who ever dreamed you were—you who have made love to every decent-looking woman in the county; but you are just as provoking and irritating as if you had been a real saint.'

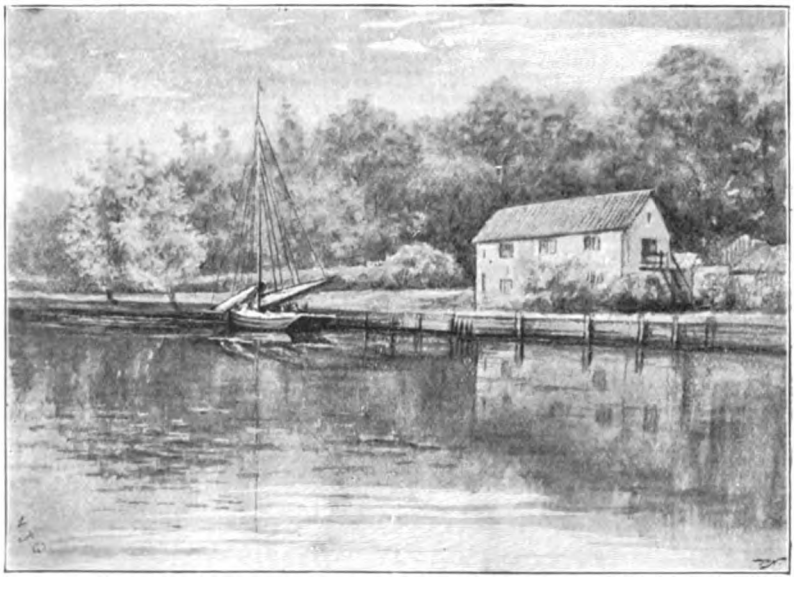
He is no match for Belinda, but being weary of the monotony, for even eels do not like being always skinned, the Worm turns at last, and says that if he is really such an utter beast, and Belinda cannot endure to live with him, she might prefer to live apart, and he will allow her——

The Worm's face by this time becomes a study for a gargoyle.

'You dear old stupid goose!' presently says a winning voice.

Whither has vanished that angry frown? Surely this is an angel's face, dimpled with radiant smiles, that gazes on his sombre brow with the artless simplicity of Eve yet unbeguiled; and in the reflected light even the Worm seems almost good-looking.

So he suggests that he can find her a cup of tea at the farm near a backwater he has once visited. While Belinda sits in the boat near the rough landing-stage he makes a pilgrimage in quest of tea. He finds that tea can be had; he will comfort her with the assurance thereof. Over rugged ways he toils back to the boat.

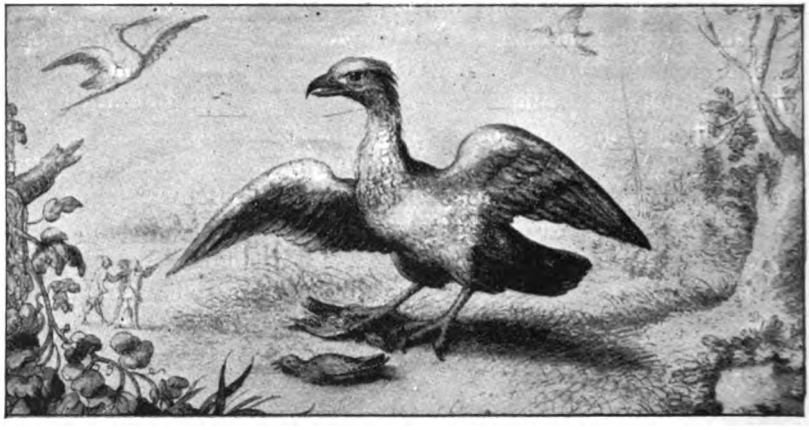


A Norfolk Wherry.

So they land, sip their tea and re-embark. The regular dip of the oars is all the sound that may be heard, save now and then the sighing of the leaves in the soft wind.

What sweet seclusion is this little mere, with its green tunnels under the overarching boughs of alder and willow, where sycamore and oak aid in making cool recesses! The whispering breeze just ruffles the surface of the pool.

How pretty Belinda looks—and Belinda knows it, and the Worm knows it, and Belinda knows that the Worm knows it—as she holds out her scarlet sunshade to catch the faint draught of air; and the skiff slowly drifts past the swaying osiers bordered with their grey-green fringe of nodding reeds.

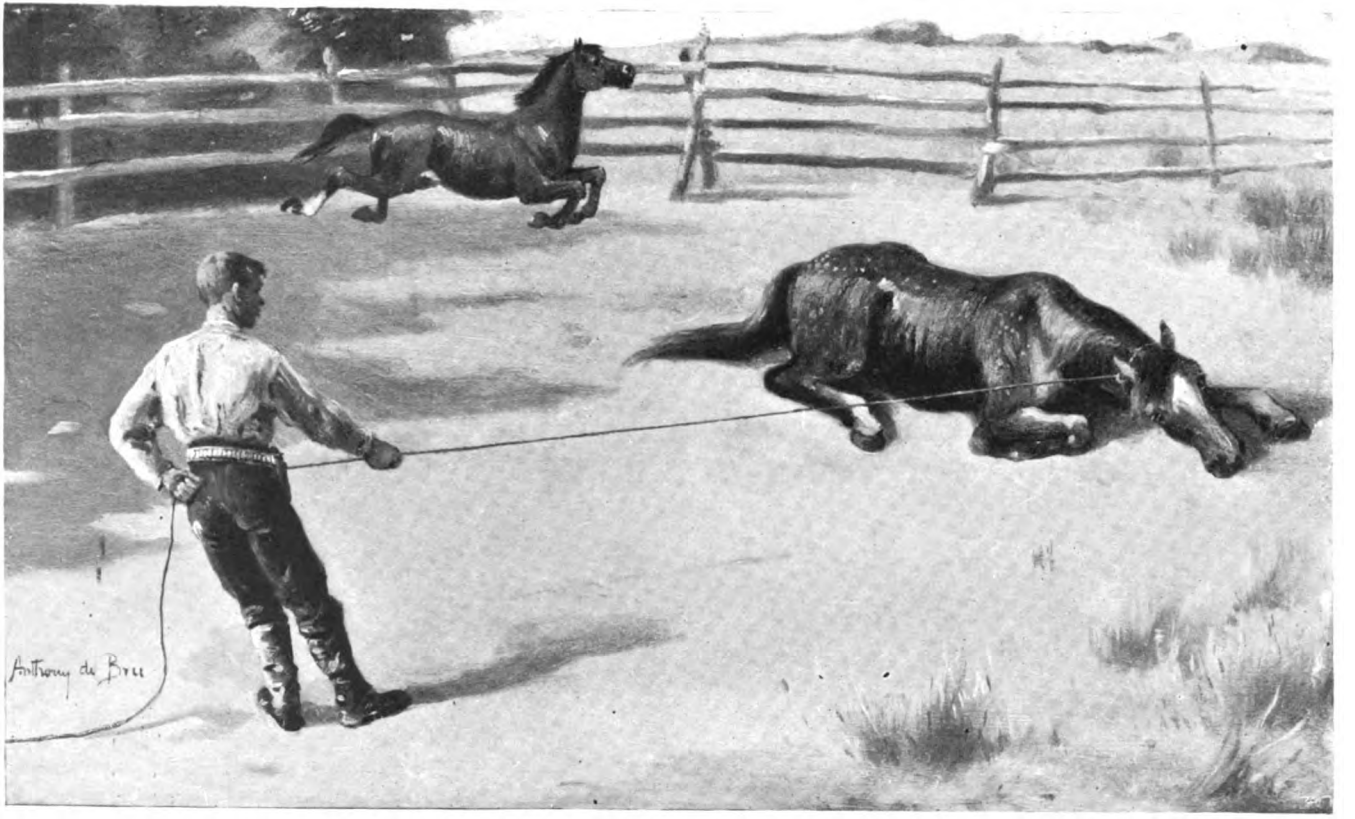


THE LAZO

BY R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

THE lazo is of great antiquity. It is said to be depicted in the ruins of Nineveh. An early Persian manuscript, preserved in the Escorial, shows a sportsman (whom I suppose royal by his Olympian expression and careless seat) in the act of catching a wild ass with a nicely plaited lazo. The monarch bestrides a rather 'stocky'-looking, dark-coloured horse, with four white feet and a white face. A bow, quivers, and a sabre are hung from his saddle, and a sort of housing half covers the horse. How the wild ass is to be restrained, even by the hand of a monarch, is not at first sight evident, for the lazo is neither fixed to the saddle after the fashion of the Gauchos, nor is a half-turn taken round the pommel, in the style adopted by Vaqueros in Mexico and Texas. Apart from this detail, all is as realistically set forth as it would be to-day in a photograph. The horse bears away from the beast lazoed, and the king sits a little to one side, exactly as a Texan Cowboy or an Argentine Gaucho sits under similar circumstances. Irises and narcissi spring up under the horse's feet, and an applauding group of angels peep out of a cloud, whilst in the middle distance another Persian Gaucho shoots an antelope with an arrow whilst galloping at full speed.

One could have wished that the lazo had been depicted nearer to the ass's head, for hanging as it does, just on the withers, the line of most resistance (so dear to monarchs) has evidently been adopted.



CATCHING ROUND THE NECK CHOKES THE ANIMAL TO THE GROUND

The Laplanders are said to lazo their reindeer, and the Tartars and modern Australians use a rudimentary lazo fixed to a long pole in order to catch wild or refractory horses. The Poles, Croatians, and Wallachians, with the Hungarians, seem to have used the lazo till about the beginning of the present century. A picture by the German artist, Richter, shows Polish remounts for the German cavalry being lazoed in the Zwinger at Dresden. The horses look as wild as a Texan 'bronco' or an Argentine 'bagual,' and the attitude of men and animals, and the way the ropes are coiled and thrown, are identical with those adopted in Spanish America to-day. The lazo appears to run through a ring in the pommel of the saddle.

It is, however, in Spanish America where the art has been most developed. This is on account of the open country and the vast numbers of wild and semi-wild horses which, up to the middle of the present century, overspread its plains. The lazo may be said to have two great schools: one the style adopted in the Argentine Republic, and the other what may be called the school of Mexico. The Argentine Gaucho and the Brazilian of the province of Rio Grande use a raw-hide lazo, plaited generally in four till within about eight or ten feet of the end, where the plaiting is usually of six, eight, or ten strands, according to fancy. The lazo terminates in a strong iron ring, which is spliced into the hide so as to remain stiff, and stick out in a straight line from the lazo. At the end kept in the hand or attached to the saddle a Turk's head and plaited loop form the finishing. The thickness of the lazo is about that of the little finger, and the hide is kept soft and pliable by frequent applications of grease, for which purpose a piece of raw mutton fat is found to answer best. The Indians use mare's grease, but bacon, oil, or any salted grease is found to burn the hide. To make a lazo the hide of a cow is procured, denuded of hair, and the various strands are softened, either by beating with a mallet or being run through an iron ring, or worked between a piece of split wood (called a 'Mordaga'). When properly softened, the inside of the hide is as white as flour, and, if well greased, will last soft for many years. The ordinary length of an Argentine lazo is about sixty-six feet, though exceptionally tall and powerful men sometimes use lazos of eighty and even ninety feet in length.

A skilful man on foot will catch a horse in a corral at the distance of ten or twelve yards, throwing at the neck. At ten yards he will secure the two fore feet, or a fore and a hind foot, both hind feet, or, catching the animal round the neck, will, by

imparting a vibratory motion to the rope, place a half-hitch round the nose, thus forming what is called a 'medio bozal,' or half-halter. To catch the feet is called 'pialar'—from *pie*, a foot. The effect of catching by the feet is to throw the creature violently to the ground. Catching round the neck chokes the animal to the ground, if enough force is used. In either case, the moment the lazo tightens, the lazoer throws himself back on the rope, like a seaman hauling in a sheet, and, digging his heels into the ground, bears heavily on the rope with his left hand, which he puts as far behind his back as possible. The strain is most severe, cutting the unaccustomed hand and destroying the clothes, so that in many cases a leather apron is worn to keep off the chafe. A strong colt of five years old will drag three or four men round a corral, if they try to stop him by sheer strength, and the lazo be not tightened high on the neck, near the ears; but a boy of sixteen, used to the work, by watching his opportunity, will easily stop the same animal.

To throw a long lazo, height is of great advantage, as, other things being equal, a tall man can throw a longer lazo than a man of low stature. The lazo is prepared for throwing by making a noose from two and a half to four yards in circumference at the ring end of the rope. The ring should be slipped down to about a third of the circumference of the noose. The remainder of the rope is coiled, and two or three coils taken into the right hand together with the noose; the rest of the coils are held in the left hand. Care must be observed not to leave too much slack rope between the coils in the right and left hands, as it is apt to get entangled when the lazo leaves the hand, especially if on horseback. Swinging the noose as many times round the head as is required to give the sufficient momentum, and taking care that this noose flies open and with a slight upward inclination, it is then let go, rather than thrown, when the hand is just above the head on the right side, and slides through the air, uncoiling as it flies.

Like throwing a fly, putting screw on a ball at billiards, and taking a close counter of carte, it is an art not easily described, and best learnt by demonstration and practice.

To become a perfect lazoer (the Spanish word is *enlazador*), the lazo must have been familiar to the thrower from his youth. To be able to catch a horse in a corral round the neck, with some certainty, can be learnt in about six months by a young and active man accustomed to athletics.

The lazo on horseback is a very different and far more dangerous affair. Accidents are frequent and often fatal, and the business

CATCHING AN ANIMAL WHILE GOING AT FULL SPEED

should not be attempted by anyone who has not learnt the art in youth. In all cattle districts, in both North and South America, men maimed with the lazo—having lost either fingers, or a hand, or foot—are as common as 'mainsheet men' used to be in seaport towns in the days of 'windjammers.'

The lazo on horseback can be used with far greater effect than on foot. From sixteen to eighteen yards is a fair distance at which to catch an animal when going at full speed. The faster the horse is going, the more easily is the rope thrown; and of course the danger increases in the same ratio. The method of casting on horseback is precisely similar to that used on foot. A larger loop or noose (called *armada* in Spanish) can be used, and care must be taken not to entangle the coils of the 'slack' with the reins, or to catch the horse's hind legs, or head, or his forefeet, or to touch him anywhere with the rope, unless he is an extremely tame and tractable animal. For this reason a less elevation must be given to the point of the noose, as it gyrates round the head, on horseback than on foot; that is to say, it should be swung almost level round the head before casting. The end of the lazo retained by the thrower is buttoned into a strong iron ring fixed behind the rider's right thigh to a piece of hide about three inches in length, which piece of hide is firmly sewn into the ring of the upper part of the strong hide surcingale which forms the girth of the Argentine saddle.

This saddle is called *el recado*: it is a modification of the old 'Bur' saddle of the time of Charles V., and is known as *albarda* to the Spaniards and *barda* to the Moors. It is composed of several pieces, and surmounted by a rug or sheepskin; the stirrups are hung long, from the middle of the saddle, and are so small as only to admit the toes. The Spaniards anciently called riding in this saddle 'riding *à la brida*' as opposed to the short stirrups and high pommel and cantle of the Moorish saddle, which style of riding was called '*à la gineta*.' The Mexican saddle has grown out of this latter style, the stirrups having been lengthened in order to facilitate mounting, and sticking to a wild horse.

When the lazo has been thrown on horseback, and the animal caught round the neck or horns, the difficulty and danger begin. Should the 'quarry' be a wild horse or mare, care has to be taken not to let it cross either in front or behind of the mounted horse. If it does so, there is great danger of a half-turn being taken in the rider's arm or leg, or even a whole turn round his body. The least that can happen is that the mounted horse gets entangled in the rope, becomes frightened, and an accident is almost certain.

Should the animal captured be a bull or cow, the rider must manage to avoid having his horse changed, and for this purpose immediately the noose settles round the beast's horns, the horseman should turn to the near side, *i.e.* away from the animal lazoed, and endeavour to keep the rope always taut. If he succeeds in doing this, there is little danger of the strongest bull pulling over even a light horse; for it is to be remembered that the weight of the saddle and the rider is an assistance to the horse, as making his weight more nearly equal to that of the bull.

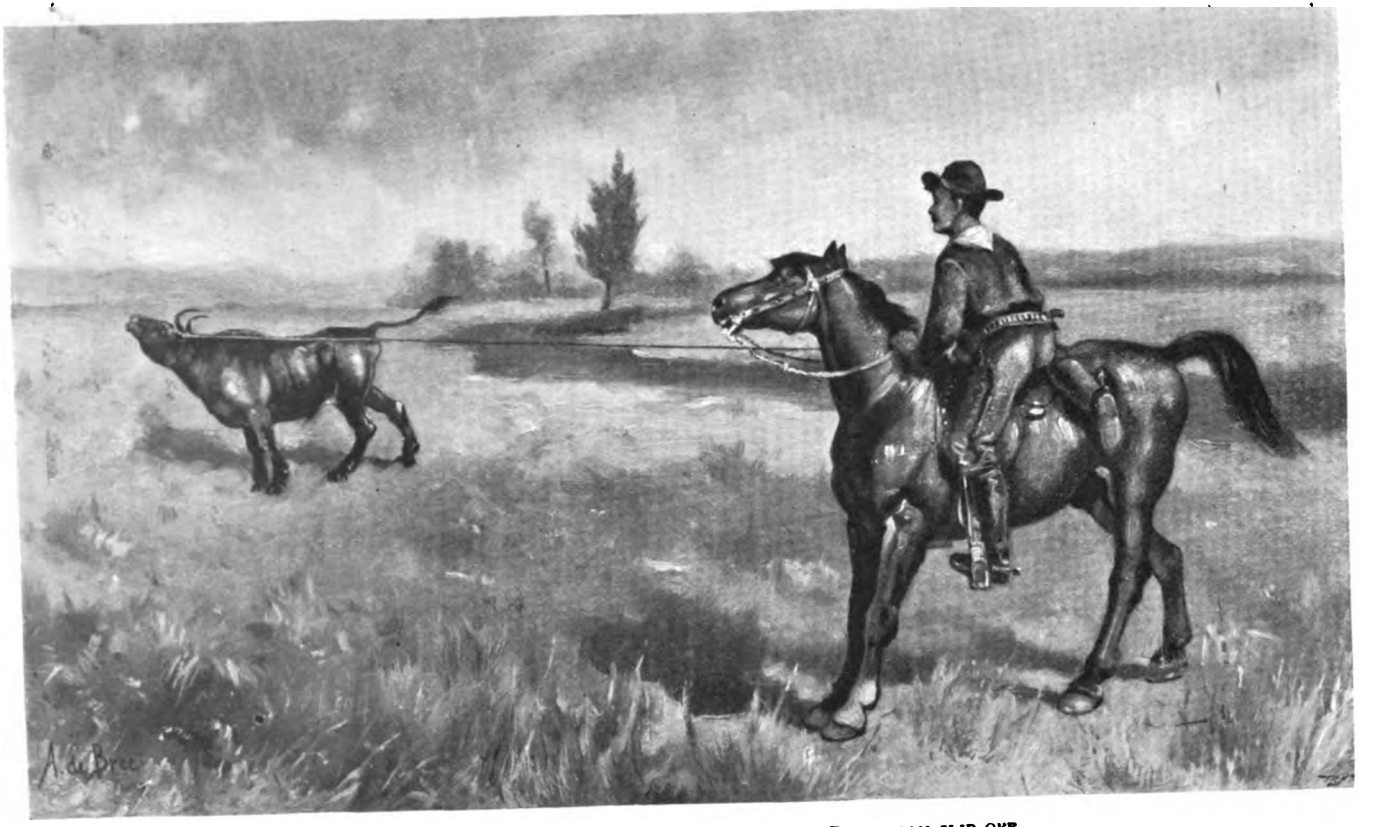
It must not be forgotten that in lazoing on horseback it is the horse that works and holds the animal caught; the rider merely throws the lazo, as no strength of his could hold an animal galloping at full speed. Some horses become so dexterous that the rider can slip off, leaving them to keep the lazo taut, and, approaching the bull, hamstring it, or kill it by plunging a long knife into its neck.

A high-spirited horse that starts, stops, and turns easily, and does not get too much excited, is the best mount for the lazoer. A low-spirited animal exposes its rider to danger from a charging bull, and an excitable horse is apt to get twisted in the coils of the lazo, or by throwing up its head, or swerving as the lazo is delivered, to make the aim defective. In almost every case the lazo is thrown on the off side of the horse (known from that circumstance in South America as the 'lazo side'), but now and then a skilful lazoer will throw to the near side, and, catching an animal, pass the rope over his own and his horse's head, or over the quarters of the horse. This process is always attended with danger, and, as the Gauchos say, should not be attempted by married men.

In South America the inhabitants of the Brazilian province of Rio Grande do Sul hold first place for skill with the lazo. After them come the inhabitants of the Republic of Uruguay and the Gauchos of the province of Buenos Ayres.

The Chilians use a slightly different lazo, without a ring, and with a loop and button at both ends. It is twisted in three strands, and known as a 'torzal.' They are skilful, but, their country being more broken, are inferior to the men on the east side of the Andes.

The second school of lazoers is that of Mexico. There the lazo is never made of hide, but of horsehair or *istlé*, or of the fibre of the aloe. No iron ring is ever used, and the lazo is all one piece, not having an addition spliced on at the end, as in South America.

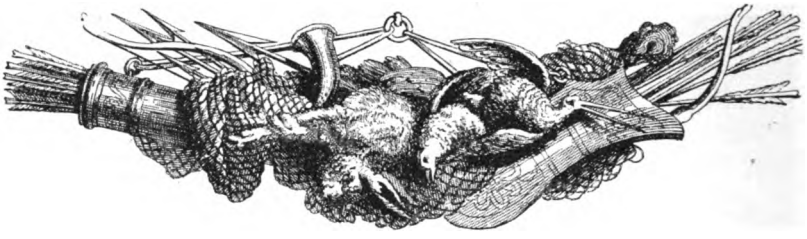


SOME HORSES BECOME SO DEXTEROUS THAT THE RIDER CAN SLIP OFF

Being of lighter material, the Mexican lazo cannot be thrown so far as that of the Pampas. It is more easily carried, however, requires no grease, closes more readily on the neck of the animal lazoed, and neither cuts a horse's legs nor a man's hands so severely as a raw-hide rope.

It is on horseback that the difference between the two schools is most manifest. The Mexican lazo is made fast to the saddle in front of the rider, and hence the difficulty of throwing to the off side is largely obviated; as it is easy to pass the lazo over the horse's head and keep the strain on the rope, and hence far fewer accidents occur in Mexico and Texas than in the Pampas. The Mexican system is, however, less effectual against the efforts of a heavy animal, as, the lazo being fastened to the horn of the saddle when an animal is caught, the rope grazes the body of the rider during the process of the struggle, and it appears improbable that the horse can throw as much weight on to the rope as he can under the Argentine system of fastening. It is usual in Mexico not to tie or make fast the end of the lazo to the saddle, but to take a half-hitch round the horse, and hold the end in the left hand. It is considered very dangerous to tie the lazo to the bow of the saddle, and a man who does so is said to *amarrar in muerte* —that is, to tie a death-knot. Mexicans are very dexterous with the lazo on foot, as, owing to the lightness of their rope, it is very easily thrown. Texans, Kansans, and men of the North-West often use a common hemp rope without a ring or button, but merely tie a bowline on a bight, and pass the coil of the rope through the bight to form a noose. Texan cowboys are often extremely skilful, performing as many feats with the lazo as the Mexicans or Gauchos, but seldom equalling the Brazilians of Rio Grande, who are the smartest men with lazo or bolas, or on a wild horse, that the writer has encountered.

The lazo, with the bolas, the boomerang, the spear, and bow, in a few years will be but memories. Rifle and gun will have replaced or rendered them unnecessary, and the descendants of the wild riders who mounted 'bagual' and 'bronco,' holding them by the ear, and getting to their seats as a bird lights upon a bough, will wait to catch the tramcar at the corner of the street. Therefore this short description may have its interest, being a sort of record of a dream, dreamed upon pampas and on prairies, sleeping upon a saddle under the southern stars, or galloping across the plains in the hot sun, photographed in youth upon the writer's brain, and, when recalled, more vivid than affairs of State which happened yesterday.



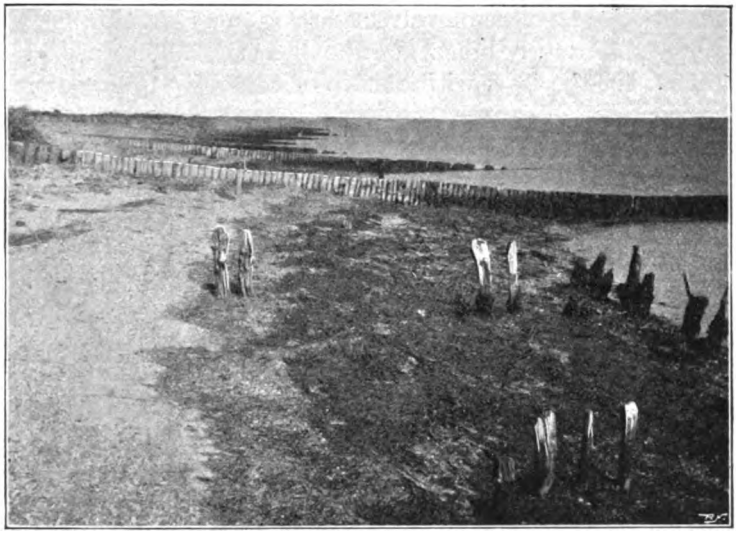
PARTRIDGES BY THE SEA-SIDE

BY THE HON. JOHN SCOTT MONTAGU, M.P.

THE September partridge is, as a rule, pursued by means of the dog or by walking; but towards the end of the month there are many places in which driving has to be resorted to, either because there is insufficient cover for the birds, who have then become very wild, or because the host in any case prefers driving to walking. On our East and South coasts there are many places bordering on the sea where partridges thrive remarkably well, and there is a special charm in partridge driving in such localities, as many novel features enter into the sport which are not to be found in the more regular routine of up-country driving. To begin with, the element of the picturesque is present in a high degree; for a tidal shore is always interesting, with its flotsam and jetsam, and a background of sea and ships is always pleasant for the eye to look upon. Nowhere are partridges driven in more pleasant surroundings than on the northern fringe of the Solent—the Isle of Wight in the background, in the middle distance the Solent, covered with various craft, from the great ocean liner of ten thousand tons and twenty thousand horse-power down to the small half-rater, a mere fragile shell—all these form a picture which would be engrossing enough even were partridges not included.

There is a good deal of land along these shores which has been reclaimed in former centuries from the sea. There are various embankments showing how, little by little, the sea has been driven back, and the land recovered for the use of man and beast. Although in these days it is probable that further reclamation would hardly be worth the fee simple of the ground, in olden days, before the advent of foreign bounty-fed products, most English land was, at any rate, worth farming, and was,

besides being the paramount and most healthful, also a most prosperous, industry. One effect of this reclamation of tidal lands is that much of the marshland is now below the level of high water, and is therefore at almost all times of the year marshy in character; a fact which is shown the more conclusively by the patches of rushes which overgrow the surface. But the herbage, containing much dwarf clover, is fine enough, and is covered with ant-hills containing a yellow ant, a favourite food for the partridge. Many times during the year more coveys are to be found feeding among these rushes than in what one would take to be their natural feeding grounds above, on the seed fields or stubbles;



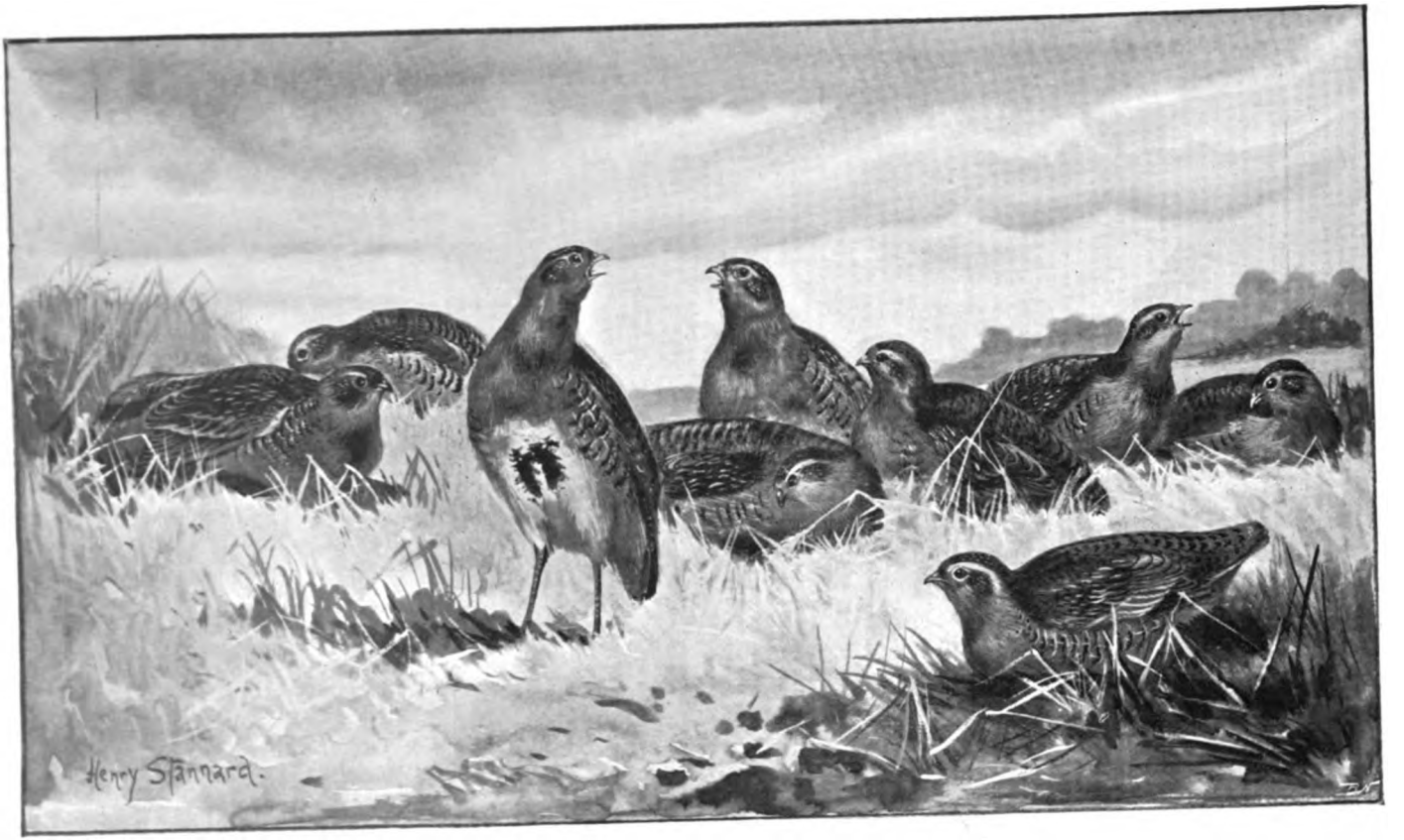
WHERE THE SANDHOPPERS LIVE

while on the shore itself it is the multitude of tiny sandhoppers which also forms an additional attraction and *bonne bouche* for the little brown bird. Indeed, I have constantly seen partridges following close after the ebb-tide where the water has just left, searching about amongst the seaweed for what are, no doubt, most succulent forms of food. Near the sea, the ground will always support a large stock of partridges per acre—that is, there is more food than in many an upland country; for in addition to the sandhoppers which I have mentioned, there are these ant-hills in unusual numbers, and many flowering grasses and estuary weeds which provide excellent and succulent food for our little brown friends.

Of course, *quâ* shooting only, on the other hand, you may prefer the high fir strip which one so often sees in the Eastern counties, or the great, old-fashioned, double fence in the north of Hampshire, where birds come over you at an angle convenient for the sportsman, and when killed well fall gracefully. But there is quite a special charm in shooting on these flat sea-marshes, for although a bird flying over a level expanse of rushes may appear easy to kill, yet many a good shot can testify to there being more difficulty than would at first seem likely; the reason probably being that the colour of the brown rushes and the birds is so very similar, and also that one is so very liable to underrate the rapidity of flight.

But we will suppose ourselves starting on a fine morning, with a light north-westerly breeze, on the First of October: six guns all anxious for the fray, with a drive of some five miles before us to the ground. Of course there is some member of the party who cannot find his pipe or his cigarette-holder at the last minute; so our host, sending ahead the four guns and their loaders, keeps his dogcart, with the fast trotter, for the one member of the party who is sure to be some minutes behind the rest. Arrived at the spot, we start with a drive that reminds us of the Eastern counties, a tract of mixed heather, gorse, and broom of some eighty acres in extent. From almost the first moment that the line advances, pheasants rise and fly low across the line to the wood which flanks the left-hand side of the drive. But pheasants are to be shot to-day as well as partridges; for, as our host reminds us, they are all wild birds, and there will be plenty left for the covert-shooting later on. After the first shot or two, we see ducks rising from a lake close by, and wheeling over our heads. There is just a chance that they may fly over the extreme flank gun—sure enough so they do, and down come a couple. By-the-bye, were they both hit the first shot? Was the second barrel wasted? But they are both retrieved, the second being barely pinioned, not without a good deal of difficulty.

Well, the first drive has, on the whole, been fairly prolific, though not so good as what we may expect later in the day when we descend towards the shore just below us. Some twenty-two brace of partridges and five-and-thirty pheasants have warmed our guns and our energies for the more serious work which is to follow. And now come two more drives, further eastwards, close to the brink of the sea; in the first the flank gun standing not more than twenty yards from the salt water, and scoring eleven brace and a half to his own barrels; for partridges are very apt



EARLY MORNING

to fly parallel with the shore, and get up suddenly behind the groynes as the drivers clamber over the jutting timbers. Another few drives, and we come to the last before lunch. A prosaic turnip-field, a decently high hedge, and a fair show of birds; and we troop off thirsty and hungry to our meal, having already had seven out of the fifteen drives which our host expects to accomplish to-day, and now to lunch. We walk three hundred yards or so to a farmhouse, now occupied, in these days of agricultural depression, by a hospitable gentleman whose love is the rod rather than the gun. Not too much talk to the ladies is allowed after the repast, for our host is anxious to get on to some of the best

THE FLANK GUN OFTEN SEES MOST OF THE GAME

drives of the day. Just five-and-twenty minutes from when we sat down and we are off again, and there will be barely time to finish a small cigar before the first birds come down over the copse above.

The drivers are yet some way off, and, calmed by a 'Laranaga,' while we rest the mind is apt to become reflective. Thoughts fly back to scenes abroad—to the burning sun and the endless acacia bush of the high veldt in Africa, to the sickening smell of the crushed locust under the coach wheel and the horrors of the rinderpest; or to the beauty of that morning at Darjeeling, when Kunchinjunga, in his mighty height of 28,000 feet, fully 10,000 of which were pure undriven snow, looked down upon the

deep valley below, an emblem of grandeur, beauty, and purity combined. And, again, one muses, Will there be shooting, or indeed will there be partridges, a hundred years hence? Shall we have an electric gun, or will the Socialistic doctrines of Mr. Henry George have prevailed against the tenets of Lord Wemyss? Perhaps, with West Australia and Klondyke, we may have a coming plethora of gold, with prosperity restored to the land, and agricultural commodities at a price profitable to the producer, yet not prohibitive to the consumer. Or, again, are the principles of free trade already really failing in their hold on the nation, and are not successful trade unions undermining the principle of the 'open market'? What about the denunciation of the Anglo-German commercial treaties——when lo, 'Mark!'—right over our heads hurry a covey of eight, while we swing round and shoot a futile barrel at sixty-five yards, as the birds turn quickly towards the root-field on the right rear of the line. No more time now for political or social problems, but a bumble-bee, lazily rising at our feet as if regretting that the heather was already withered by the late September frosts, still endeavours to divert our attention. Yes, my friend, your life is nearly spent if you have not found yourself a winter home. But we are unfortunate this time, as birds stream over either flank, and the drive—although a most picturesque one, and prolific as regards pheasants, which come prettily sweeping over the stunted oaks—has not been to us particularly successful as regards partridges.

The wood drive over, we hurry on to the two more drives before we come to the 'Valley of Death.' This drive is curiously shaped for the concentration of the birds from either side; on the north there is an extensive farmsteading, with high elms, and a big, old-fashioned rickyard. Part of the farmhouse has been built with the stones brought by the Cistercian monks of Beaulieu, some seven hundred years ago, from the quarries of the Isle of Wight and Caen in Normandy. There is just comfortable room for six guns between this farmhouse and the shore—two guns under a high withy fence and four in hurdle-butts on the marsh itself, which stretches away in the distance for over a mile to the eastward, a level expanse of rushes, broken here and there by a solitary gorse-bush, and studded with little ant-hills grown over with springy turf, containing within the ants and ants' eggs, the partridges' favourite food. Over these four hurdle-butts which our host has had placed somewhat unusually close together will come the weight of the birds. It is most desirable to make these shelters large enough to cover comfortably

a gun, his loader, and a dog or two; and three hurdles will be required to accomplish this, for the return drive has to be provided for, and a sort of double-headed 'T' is thus formed of the three hurdles. There are many advantages in thus making your butts with hurdles fringed with broom or fir boughs. In the first place, from year to year, according to the crops, these shelters can be placed in various positions, and everyone knows

AN OUTSIDE BIRD, BUT A BEAUTIFUL SHOT

that, excepting in a few rare localities, one cannot, as is done in the case of grouse, arrange one's drives year after year on the same plan.

As you sit patiently waiting on your shooting-stool, there are many objects in Nature which may interest you before the first covey glides over the rushes in front of you. When the drivers show themselves under the shore an old heron rises from the

edge of the tideway with his slow flap of wing, so slow that it seems almost impossible for him to sustain so large a body. Yet, in speed of flight, the heron far excels many a smaller bird with a seemingly far quicker pace. Coming towards us with his legs quaintly drawn up behind, he flies back towards the heronry some two miles off, on the borders of Sowley Pond, the waters of which were dammed back and used in olden times by the monks of Beaulieu to work their primitive but heavy forging-hammer. And rich and luscious food it is that our grey friend gets along the shore; for, in addition to the many little silvery sand-eels, there are the sand-shrimps, small prawns, and 'stripy-jackets' (a kind of small prawn), as they are locally called, in abundance. I recollect once shooting a heron—I am glad to say the first and last that I can ever be accused of having shot—and finding inside his crop a great quantity of prawns, some of which were quite large enough to have graced the table of an epicure, and one or two small specimens of that beautifully coloured fish, the sea-bream (*Chrysophrys aurata*), which delights to haunt the shallower waters where small shellfish live. As he goes lazily wending his way westwards, our host's voice rings out 'Don't shoot!' though this warning is hardly necessary to a team consisting not only of good shots, but sportsmen. And now we see other shore birds which have been disturbed coming towards us. The dunlin, with his rapid flight; various kinds of small plover and sanderling; and, last of all, a pair of bar-tailed godwits—at this time of year migrants on their way to warmer climes. Rather bigger than a golden plover, with a body sized and shaped something like a woodcock, and with a beautiful mottled brown and white plumage, these birds skirt along the shore just out of range.

But now a covey of partridges sweep over the sea bank on the left of the line, as if they had sprung out of the ocean, and settle in the rushes some ninety yards from the guns. Ten to one they will go back before the drivers come up; but hardly have they settled when we hear from the gun farthest from the shore two shots, and see a pair—possibly a barren pair—fall neatly, one in front and the other behind the somewhat high fence under which the guns Nos. 5 and 6 are standing. Up gets the covey, and hemmed in by the sea come over the outside gun of the shore end of the line. Startled, two of them break off from the rest when the first bird of the covey falls, and skim on as far as our eyes can reach across the sea in the direction of the Isle of Wight. Can they get across? Our host shakes his head doubtfully, and tells us afterwards of coveys picked up

by fishing boats off this coast. Now we see white flags waving in the distance, and birds are pouring on, sometimes singly, sometimes in coveys. The three centre guns are having more than they can do, and the outside gun by the shore, who might have been expected to have had a somewhat poor drive, has had as many birds over him as anyone else. The drivers come gradually closer until they get into a piece of rough pasture just above the marsh, where there are almost sure to be a few cock pheasants lurking.

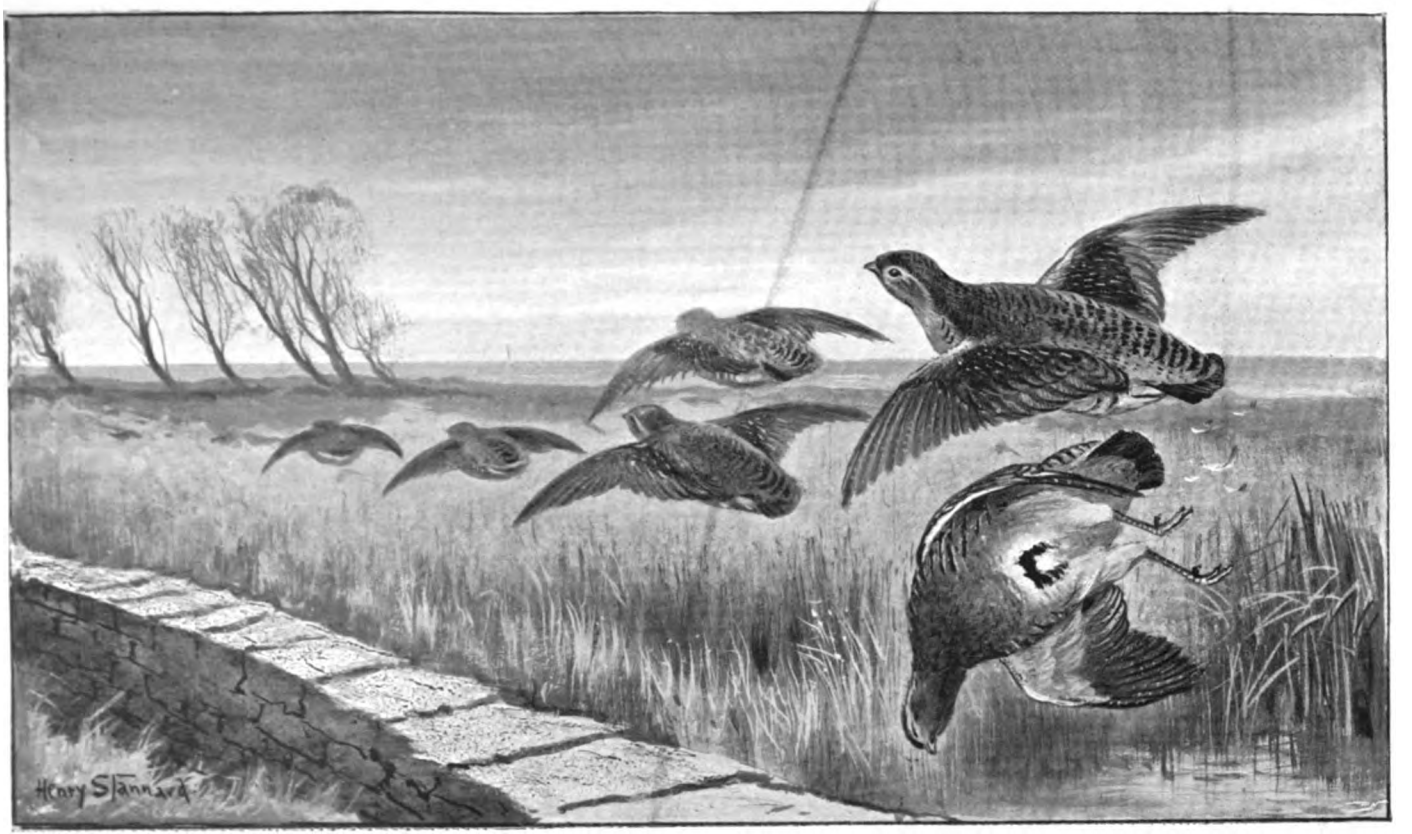
WHILE THE CENTRE GUNS ARE GETTING SOME WARM WORK

Up gets one old bird who has weathered many a storm of last year, who has braved many a day's covert shooting, has run past many a 'stop,' and rocketed down wind over many a sportsman in the previous season. Has he lost some of his cunning, or why is he thus coming on to meet an almost certain doom? Free from alarm all the spring, occupied with the delights of courtship and matrimony in the early summer, contented in the pride of fatherhood and the abundance of good food in the early autumn, he has grown somewhat careless of his fate,

secure in the record of a useful past, and forgetful of his natural enemy, the man with a gun. Instead of rising, as of yore, this time he skims low over the marsh, as a grouse over the heather, and when about twenty-five yards from No. 4 gun—just as he tops a furze bush—he falls a crumpled mass, leaving behind him the three or four little neck feathers floating in the air, the only relic of his confidently enjoyed life. 'Sic transit;' and now comes another young cock pheasant with a voice not yet toned down by the frosts of winter, crowing in a high falsetto, like an overgrown choir-boy in his first efforts to sing a tenor part. He and others behind him share the fate of our first friend. One old hen, how-

HE MUST HAVE RUN

ever, perhaps seeing the fall of her children, turns back over the heads of the beaters. She has probably run up within a few yards of the guns and has realised that more danger exists within the broom-topped hurdles than among the apparently alarming white flags which she first sighted. Just as we were thinking the drive over, 'Mark!' cries our host, as three partridges get up right by the brink of the sea where they have been squatting by some rough stones. Widely they separate, two flying back over the heads of the drivers, but the other, after defeating two of the centre guns, falls a victim—a beautiful long cross shot—to our friend No. 6, and '' ''ive is over. Now to pick up quickly, and



THE MARSHES NEAR THE SEA

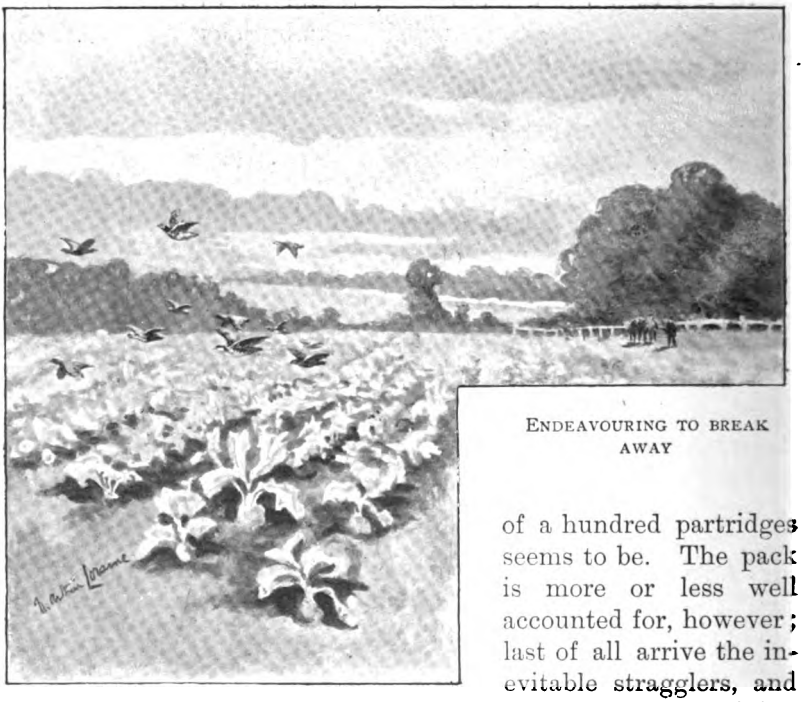
to signal to the other set of men to come on, for the second drive is generally as good as, if not better than, the first; for besides broken birds there is also fresh ground to be brought in, and if there is time even a third drive over the same line of butts is often a most successful manœuvre. Still, we have already done fairly well with this first drive in the 'Valley of Death.' Forty-two brace of partridges and eighteen pheasants are already picked up, besides a stray snipe which we now discover one of our flank guns has killed passing over at a great height, when we ourselves were engaged with the partridges.

In the west the sky is already beginning to look grey, and, as the meteorologist would say, cirro-nimbus clouds have already appeared. The wind also has backed to the southward in an ominous way, and, moreover, have we not read in the *Times* of the previous day that 'a high-pressure ridge,' which has been passing over the British Isles from the Atlantic, is expected to give way ere long to further cyclonic depressions with westerly winds? However, sufficient for this day has been the sunshine thereof, and if the advent of depressions is coincident with the tide, as our host reassuringly tells us, we are safe till the evening; for it is not until eight or nine o'clock that it will be high water again.

We have scarcely had time to pick up a distant bird, which may have been a runner, when our host again hurries us into our places, as the keepers, who are to come up with the drivers from the reverse direction, will hunt all the fences for stray runners as they advance. Sure enough, back comes a covey which was never broken in its first passage over the line; but this time, with fatal indecision, it attempts to settle around the hurdle-butts. Just as the birds are hovering and settling, down come a brace, and again another brace, as the two centre guns take them, now quite easy shots, crossing slowly in front of the line. Up get the remainder, scattering in every direction, and out of fourteen birds that settled we notice that five only hurry back in the direction from which they have so lately come. But now there is an interval; a stray bird or two come over rather wide of the line on the land side, and just as we are beginning to think that this return drive must be a failure, we see a bird—as we think, a runner from the previous drive—following down the line of one of the trenches in the marsh. But no, he is a red-leg; up he gets, and with the steadiness of a well-trained Yorkshire grouse he faces the line, only to be dropped beautifully within a yard of No. 3 butt. A good deal of shouting and 'Hold

'em up!' comes down wind, and on the land side we see a biggish pack of birds endeavouring to break away. The wind, which hitherto has been north-west, is now blowing in a good deal more strongly from the sea; but the flankers are there well forward of the line, and with the exception of one or two outside birds, the big pack comes in a straggling mass over the line of guns, numbering, perhaps, some seventy or eighty birds.

Thus coming in a mass together, an inexperienced sportsman would say 'hundreds of them,' not realising how large a pack

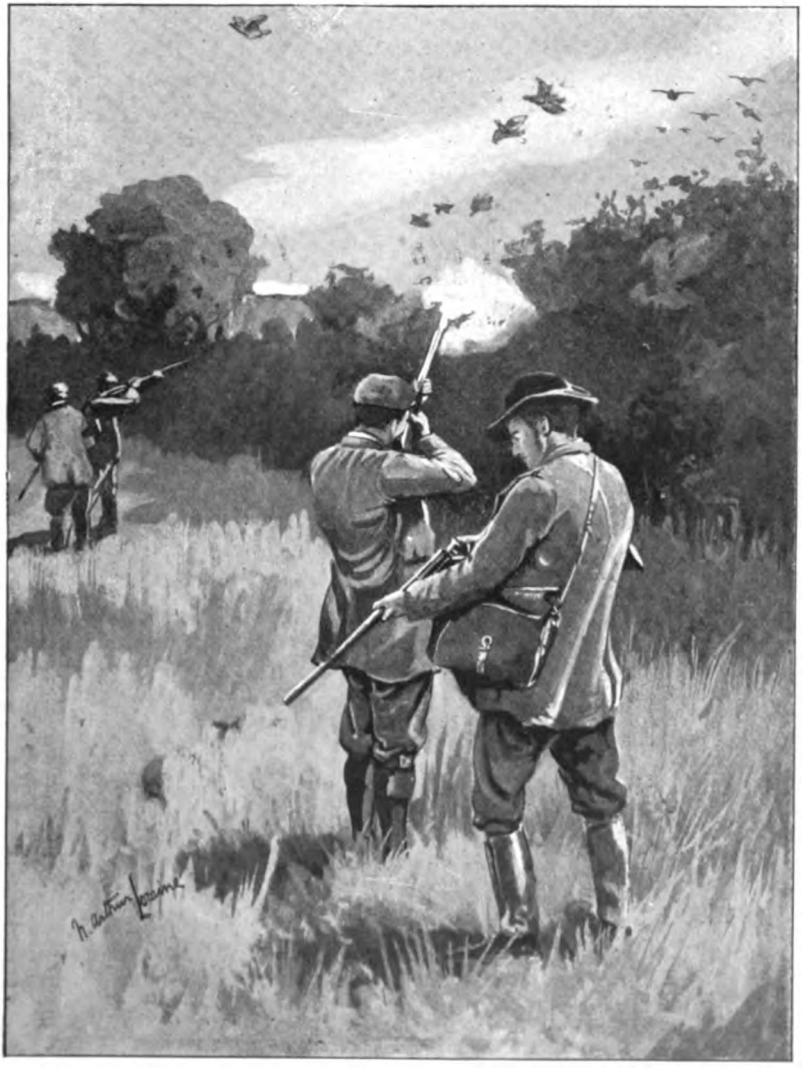


ENDEAVOURING TO BREAK AWAY

of a hundred partridges seems to be. The pack is more or less well accounted for, however; last of all arrive the inevitable stragglers, and then a few remaining pheasants which have escaped from the previous drive. This time there has been an extremely even average of success, for not only has the shooting been good, but the birds have favoured the flanks as well as the centre guns. Our friend by the shore has this time got eighteen, while all the three centre guns can claim over twenty apiece. Altogether the drive totals up to ninety-six birds in all, the best drive of the day.

Is there yet time to have just one more? This is somewhat doubtful, for the sun, like a big red globe of fire, has already dipped beyond Hurst Castle into the English Channel,

and through our host's mind is also revolving the thought that here, in the centre of the ground, it is inadvisable to punish his birds too heavily. However, enthusiasm gets the better of his



BACK COME SOME BIRDS

fears, and another return drive is ordered. The head keeper hurries on to meet his flank men, who at this time of the day are apt to get somewhat slack, thinking rather of the refreshing quart at the finish,

and are prone to leave unmethodical gaps in their ranks. Nevertheless, our host is soon rewarded, as back come some birds, and before the drive is over, notwithstanding the increasing darkness, fifty-three more have been added to the bag. Two hundred and fifty-four brace of partridges, 140 pheasants, a snipe, two ducks, and several hares and rabbits make up our total, without to-morrow's pick-up. As we drive home, we are told how, from small beginnings, from days of fifteen and twenty brace, by careful management, by change of blood, and by driving, and driving only, the number of partridges has been thus increased—a contrast with the past, and an example for the future.

But just before we start, one of the party suggests that we should all subscribe a present to the drivers; for although there have been two sets of men, many of them have had to walk four or five miles before the day began, and the sun, although it be the First of October, has been as hot as on many a midsummer day. The drivers thus take a pride in the success of the day, and the gift will not be forgotten to-morrow, or indeed next season, when perhaps an extra drive late in the evening is wanted. As the carriage takes us up to the higher ground above the marshes, we already see the riding lights of the ships off Cowes winking across to us in the deepening blue haze of the east; and the occulting lights of the two Lepe gas-buoys show us the northern limits of the track of the big liners to America—North and South—and to that much-troubled land, South Africa. On the way home the conversation gradually falls in tone, and more than one of the party allow their senses to fade away into dreamland, where perhaps the memories of the day—the pursuit of the partridge, and regret for a bad miss or two—are strangely mixed with the cares of politics or business half-remembered, and the problems of the unknown future common to us all.

Walking up partridges has many charms, and to properly organise driving you must first have looked over and thus gained experience by the knowledge of your ground under every conceivable condition. If you know your ground, and are fond of driving, you will hardly surpass the enjoyment of a day thus spent—and well spent—on the seashore with the little brown bird.

MARKHOR STALKING IN THE HIMALAYAS

BY HARRY LINDSAY

After marching 300 odd miles from Srinagar, by way of the Scind and Indus valleys, I found myself, the first week in May, the possessor of a nullah, situated several marches beyond Rondoo in Baltistan. This nullah, which for various reasons must be nameless, was generally supposed to hold markhor and ibex. But, on account of its excessively precipitous cliffs and dangerous climbing, it had not been shot for some years. Also the fact of there being no village near to it no doubt deterred sportsmen from shooting there; as no village near means no eggs, chickens, milk, or mutton. All this proved very lucky for me, as several 'sahibs' had passed it by before I reached it.

It must be confessed that the climbing was hard and at times risky, but then the sport was worth it.

The first week's stalking resulted in three or four ibex, but no signs of markhor had been seen. Though markhor and ibex are both of the family of goats and much of the same size, yet their spoor are quite different, and easily distinguishable. As one markhor is worth twenty ibex, we were getting a little downhearted.

Lying outside my tent, one evening, taking a general spy round, I saw some white shapes coming down the hill at a great

pace, but the distance was too great to make out what they were.

For an hour my glass was rigidly kept on the spot where I had last seen what I fondly hoped would prove the objects of my quest. Just as the sun was sinking, a beast appeared on the far-off skyline slightly higher up; and following him six more beasts soon showed. With the distant snow ranges as a background I was enabled to make out that at least three carried horns and were undoubtedly of the spiral horned variety of the markhor. Of the other four I could make out nothing for certain. Subsequent experience has taught me that markhor invariably rush down hill in the evening to drink. Had I known this, I might have taken it for granted that these white objects were markhor and thereby saved myself further spying, which is very trying to the eyes in a bad light.

It soon became so dark that nothing more could be made out. The creatures were on the other side of the nullah, and to get to them we should have had to descend 2,000 feet to the stream below and then ascend 3,000 feet on the other side.

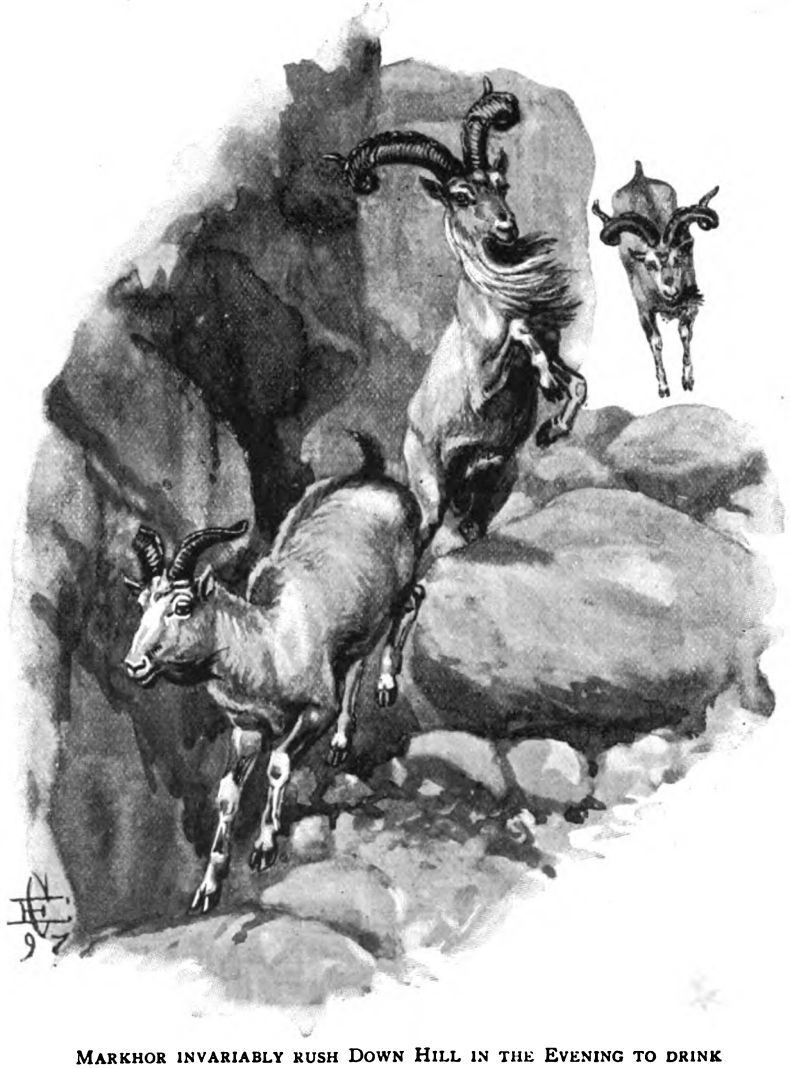
It was too late to think of setting off to sleep above them, so having arranged with my shikari, Sultana Khan, to start at 4 A.M. the next morning, I turned in with the pleasurable and excited feeling of having at any rate *seen* markhor, knowing that they were in my nullah, and that with good luck I might get a stalk on the morrow. At 3 A.M. the 'Kitmugger' awoke me from my pleasant dreams, and a few minutes later saw me tucking into a substantial breakfast, which only the healthy life in the Himalayas permits one to indulge in at such an early hour.

An hour later we started. Sultana, though as keen as mustard, said we were an hour too early, as we should first have to spy them from our side of the nullah, in order to see where they had fed to during the night. After stumbling for half an hour over a rough goat track, it was still pitch dark when we reached the only point from which it was possible to make a descent. So we sat down for Sultana's hour, and waited for light.

One hates being wrong in judging time or distance, and one hates it still more when a blackman tells one beforehand that one is going to be wrong. Later on I got over that feeling with Sultana, and learnt many wrinkles from my old shikari.

At last a ray of light touched up the snow tops above, and gradually everything began to take shape and form. Even in the semi-darkness I got out the glass and fruitlessly searched for the

desired white objects. About 5.30 a white stone, in the far distance, caught my eye; then I saw it move, and exultingly I cried out 'I've got 'em!'



MARKHOR INVARIABLY RUSH DOWN HILL IN THE EVENING TO DRINK

But Sultana, with his field glasses (he could not see through a stalking glass), said he could see nothing.

A few minutes later they all loomed clear and distinct out of the still hazy light. They had moved farther up the nullah and slightly lower down the 'Khud.' Apparently they were in a most

excellent position for a stalk. So we started off, to descend the 2,000 feet to the stream below.

The descent, in daylight, requires the greatest caution, and in this dim light was decidedly nasty. It was seven o'clock by the time we reached the bottom. Fording the snow-melted stream, we began the tedious ascent, making straight for the place where we last saw the creatures. As the ground about here was so broken and rocky, it would have been waste time trying to get above them; besides which the wind invariably blows down hill until about nine o'clock, when the sun is well up. After going for an hour over the most awful ground, we came to a perpendicular line of rocks, completely barring our way. The 'Gaon-wallah' (village man) said it was impossible to cross, and that we must go 1,000 feet higher up and get round the obstacle. This statement Sultana treated with doubt, as he did everything the 'Gaon-wallah' said. Sultana's verdict was, that we should try it and find out for ourselves. Leaving the others behind, we scaled the rocks, and though many nasty places had to be negotiated, we got over them in time.

Another hour's toil brought us to another similar line of rocks, on the other side of which we had last seen the markhor. Here we came to a halt. Sultana, taking off his turban and exposing his closely-shaven head, crawled to the ridge to spy. I sat down to regain my wind, which had been severely tried during the last three hours, and to think to myself that, should the markhor have only stayed where they were, a shot was almost certain. But this good luck was not to be. Sultana crawled back and explained to me that they had gone, and probably fed up hill.

Crossing the ridge, we found by their tracks they had fed up hill. It was now ten o'clock, and 'Hurry up' was the word, as it was most important to, at any rate, mark where they would lay up for the day. Following their tracks, we continued to ascend for another hour, till we came to another great mass of rocks. Sultana went forward to reconnoitre.

For a quarter of an hour he remained motionless, gazing up hill; then slowly turning his head, I saw that his ugly old face was grinning with delight. That grin meant good news, as Sultana was a sour old chap as a rule. I gingerly crawled up to him, and he whispered that they were feeding some way up the hill. Cautiously raising my head, I peered round a big rock, and by the help of the binoculars made out two heads amongst the rocks above.

Here we stayed for half an hour, till they had fed round a

spur. I tried the wind many times, as by this hour it should have been blowing up hill, which would give them our wind. Not a breath. The thrown-up dust floated straight up. What should we do? Wait till the evening, or go for them now?

I SAT DOWN TO REGAIN MY WIND

These were Sultana's questions. Eventually I decided to 'up and at 'em,' as they were feeding on and might have gone far. So off we started again, crawling, cat-like, from boulder to boulder.

On reaching the spur, we cautiously craned our necks round a rock, and saw them 400 yards above us, on the edge of a

small ravine, which they, no doubt, intended to cross and ascend the cliffs above. No time was to be lost. To advance was impossible, as we should have been in full view.

While Sultana looked round for an inspiration, I inspected them minutely, for the first time, at close quarters. There turned out to be five rams and two females. Three of the rams were shootable, one of them had a fine head, over forty inches, while the other two were probably over thirty-five inches. The other two rams were 'Chota-Wallahs.'

Meanwhile Sultana's inspiration had arrived. We must get back 100 yards and descend into the ravine. By this means we should perhaps get a shot as they are crossing it, an arrangement which sounded very easy; but we found the descent into the ravine much worse than we expected.

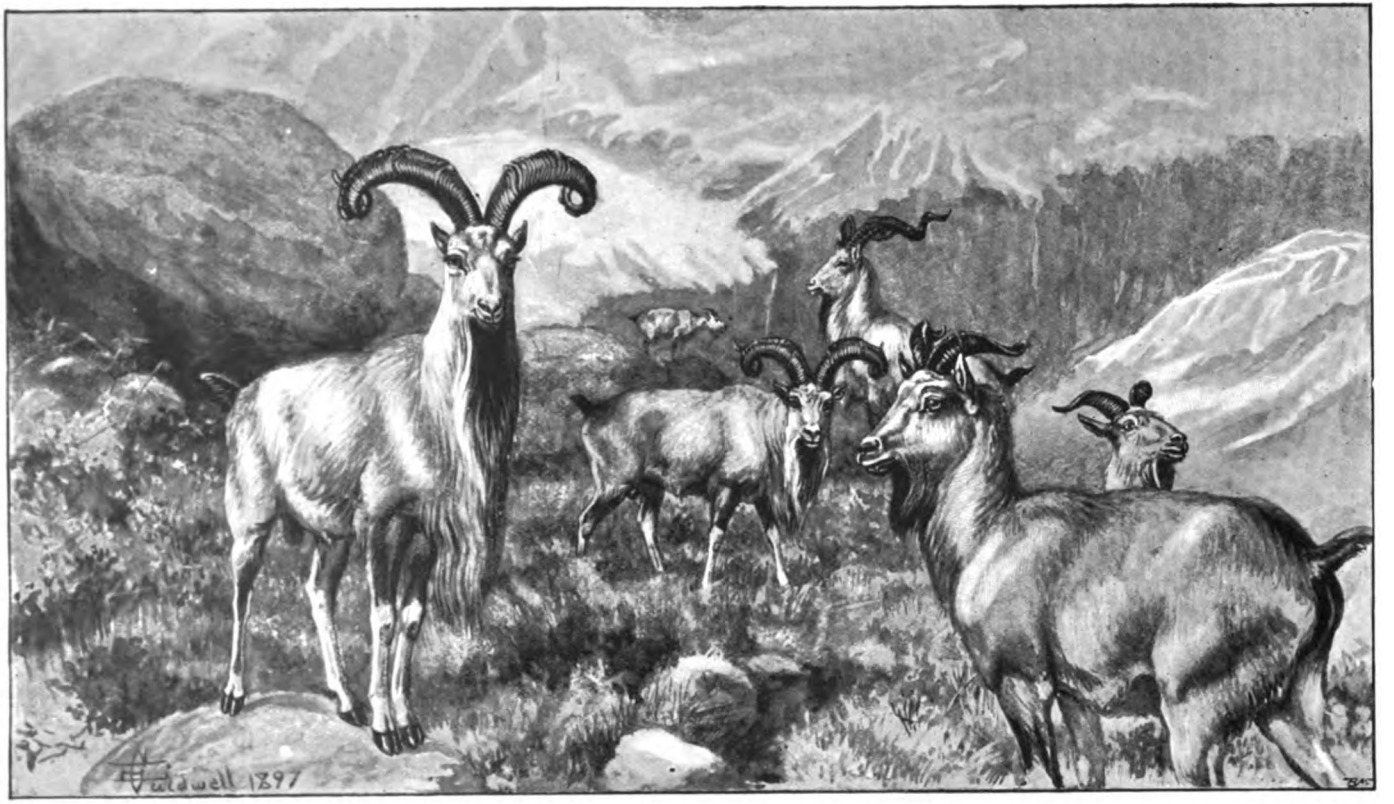
Discarding our sticks and using toes and finger tips, like flies on a window-pane we crawled along a ledge overhanging the ravine, and reached a large boulder which hid us from above. Here Sultana's face was again suffused with hideous grins. Craning my head over his shoulder, I saw that the markhor were moving down towards the ravine, as he had anticipated.

They were now 200 yards from us and 100 feet above. Oh, for some secure place to shoot from! The top of the boulder would have answered the purpose, but it was as smooth as glass and impossible to scale. Ah! that puff of wind on my neck! Where did it come from? Was it Sultana breathing? No, it was that infernal wind, choosing to change at the one moment of my life I most particularly desired it to remain steadfast.

The markhor got it almost as soon as I did, and with it the taint of man! Up went all seven heads. What grand old chaps they looked in their fear and defiance! A shrill double whistle, from that she devil of a female sentry above, and they all started forward.

Here was a pretty mess! Perched on a ledge of rock a few inches wide; smooth rock at my back; in front a drop of 100 feet into the ravine; the game bolting 200 yards off and far above me! Well! It's not exactly the chance I should have wished for. I took a pace forward, completely exposing myself, and it now became a case of snap-shooting or nothing.

The hindermost ram stopped and looked down on us; his head thrown up, exposing his splendid long white beard. Leaning my back against the rock, and keeping as firm foothold as was possible, I took as good an aim as my trembling and unsupported arms would allow of.



UP WENT ALL THEIR HEADS

The odds were 10 to 1 on the beast; yet I fancied he wriggled to the shot. Then the lot came scrambling down, with a clatter of stones and débris, on to the snow bridge below.

They were now within the same range, but 100 feet below me. Picking out the leading ram, I gave him a shot, as he plunged through the soft snow. Pivoting round on his hind legs he exposed his other broadside. Plump went the left barrel into him. Sultana, with a muffled yell of delight, told me to leave him alone, as he was done for.

The remainder now scrambled up the rocks on the other side and were soon 100 feet above me. Reloading as fast as my awkward position would allow, I spotted the third good ram.

'By Jove, it's the "burra-wallah!"' (big chap). Shooting at him, like at a rocketing pheasant, a puff of white below his belly showed a stone hit too low. The left barrel a puff of white above him—too high, cruel luck! While he was bounding up from rock to rock I got two more cartridges in. The third shot knocked him all endways. He nearly toppled over backwards, but recovering, he managed to stumble on, and then all disappeared over the skyline. The second markhor I now saw was lying at the bottom of the ravine. Scrambling down, we cast him a hurried glance, and seeing he was dead, climbed up the khud in pursuit of the big one.

Arriving at the top we found plenty of blood tracks. We followed him for two miles, across a long open piece of ground, where we completely lost all trace of him. Here we sat down and spied the whole country around, but could see no signs of any living animal; so we felt ourselves compelled to abandon the pursuit, determining to come back the next day. If he was dead, we might find him with the aid of the Lammergeiers (vultures), who always appear soon after a kill.

We returned to the dead ram, and found the first bullet had caught him just behind the shoulder and must have reached his heart; the second had got him too far back to be instantly fatal, but it was the first shot which did the business. I now proposed to look for No. 1 markhor, but Sultana was sure he was not hit. I, however, felt confident that he was, as he gave that peculiar wriggle which indicates a hit. Also he had not appeared with the rest, when they crossed the ravine.

Sultana now went back, to find the 'Chota-shikari,' 'Tiffin Cooly' and 'Gaon-wallah,' whom we had left behind early in the morning. The sun in the ravine had become oppressively hot, and the glare off the snow almost blinding. I sat down in the

shade and ate snow, which is the next best thing to water when you are parched with thirst.

After an hour's waiting, as Sultana had not returned, I thought I would go a short way up the ravine, to spy for No. 1 markhor; and after proceeding for a long time, I discovered a white object far up in the rocks; but all I could make out was something light under a bush, which might well have been a rock or a patch of snow. Continuing to spy every nook and cranny, I found myself, for the hundredth time, being drawn to examine that suspicious white object.

At last I noticed a raven perch close by. This aroused my suspicions. The raven hopped to the ground and then flew up again. He repeated this manœuvre several times. Then I perceived a vulture, soaring high up in the skies, in never-ending circles.

All this pointed out to there being carrion about. Why not my markhor? The evidence was good, but still I could make out nothing definite. I now saw Sultana entering with the 'Tiffin Cooly' and 'Gaon-wallah,' who said they had not heard my shots and had stayed where we left them, giving poor old Sultana a long walk to get at them.

It was now 4 P.M., and as I had not touched food for twelve hours I managed to get through a good lunch, after which I proceeded to examine for the twentieth time 'my first markhor.' What a splendid beast he was! What graceful, wide-spreading, spiral horns! What a mane! Not a record head, certainly, but thirty-eight inches, very massive, and much broken off at the tips. How enormous he looked—'as big as a pony!' In fact, he was well over ten hands at the shoulder, with a splendid long black and white beard, reaching below his knees. It was worth a bit of risky climbing to get him.

The Kodak, which the 'Tiffin Cooly' always carried, was now brought into requisition, in order to immortalise him in all his dead glory. The sad duty of cutting up such a splendid beast had then to be performed; but I spared myself that sight, and marched off the 'Gaon-wallah' to see what he thought of my white object under the bush. On being shown it he said he did not think much of it, and that being his opinion, I told him he might go up the cliffs and look at it a bit closer before he ventured to form a conclusion. When he got half way up his sharp eyes made out what it really was, and he signalled me to come up.

Half an hour's climbing brought me to it, and there, sure enough, was the markhor lying under a rose bush; the raven croaking dismally on a rock above.

AND THERE WAS THE MARKHOR

He had not had much of a meal; the eyes he had pecked out, and he had pecked also at the wound. But no harm had been done to the head skin. 'Wait, my loathsome and foul-feeding friend; in a few minutes you may have the whole carcase to gorge yourself on.' I found the bullet had caught the markhor far back, raking him through up to the lungs. How he managed to get so far was a wonder, and I have since come to the conclusion that these hardy goats take a lot of killing.

A pool of blood under a rock thirty feet above showed where he lay down, till death overcame him, when he must have fallen down and been providentially caught by the rose bush, saving an ugly fall into the ravine below. He was a fine beast, with wide-spreading horns, thirty-five inches in length, with a spread of thirty-two inches from tip to tip. I had to skin him myself; the 'Gaon-wallah' refused to touch him as there had been no 'Hallal,' and it was therefore 'unclean' to the Mahommedan. I found out to my cost that the beast was unclean to me, too. The ticks, who changed their abode and honoured me with a visit, were legion.

The skinning took some time, as he had lain in the sun for some hours and become stiff. To the 'Gaon-wallah's' disgust, I saddled him with the head and skin; he swearing all the time that he could never wear the blanket they were wrapped in again. I never afterwards noticed him without his blanket, however, so I presumed he thought it better to be unclean than cold. I am always averse from causing natives to break their 'caste,' but this was a case of pure laziness. His caste forbade him to *eat* unclean food, but not to carry it. By the time I got back to Sultana it was 7.30 P.M., so we started off homewards, reaching our sheltering rock half an hour after dark. But what was a bit of dark scrambling and a few falls after such a day's stalking?

The rock was not much protection, but the night was fine and we were contented with ourselves. My tiffin-basket produced some 'Chupatties' (roast cakes made of flour and water), a tin of potted meat, and a handful of tea, which I always carried, in case of being benighted. Sultana soon had a fire lit, and my tea boiling in an old jam tin. Eating up the last crumb, rolling myself up in a warm Kashmiri blanket, and lighting my pipe, I called Sultana, and we fought the fight over again.

I praised him for his dash, but was compelled to talk to him seriously about his stalking; pointing out that I did not intend to make that kind of stalking the rule. There was too much risk and trusting to luck about it. If we could not do the thing

properly one day, we must lay up and wait for the morrow. No more rocketers!

Sultana owned that the Sahib was right, but he said it was 'Kismet! Kismet! Kismet!' Everything is Kismet with these Kashmiris. No doubt it is a grand faith to have, but those who trust entirely to Kismet are content to accept whatever happens, and do not try to improve matters.

I wondered if it was my Kismet to be lying there far away up

WE FOUGHT THE FIGHT OVER AGAIN

in the grand Himalayas, 16,000 feet above the sea, the glorious moon shining down upon me, and the lazy murmuring of the stream soothing me to sleep. Nothing to think of but the grand sport of the past day and the hope of sport to come.

If that is my Kismet, then Kismet is indeed kind to me. Had not I better stop here? Yes, I think so, and will say good-night, hoping that some of my readers have had, or will have, dreams as pleasant as those I enjoyed that night of 'my first markhor.'

AMATEUR CRUISING ON THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND

BY W. MACNEILE DIXON, LITT.D.

Lette wyn, lette lose, belyke 'tis true
  Ye issue of ye daye will bee
Not to ye dreamers, but to those
  Who stayke their alle on victorie;
Notte to ye skiffes uponne ye streames,
  Butte ye stronge shippes uponne ye sea.

THE west coast of Scotland cannot be described as the Paradise of the amateur yachtsman; that term must be reserved for the Solent, the Clyde, or other like sheltered waters. Off the west coast the tides run strongly, the lofty hills brew hard and mischief-working squalls, harbours are not many nor easily made, and the great western swell of the Atlantic sets in heavily among the outer rocks and islands. Yet, whatever pleasures, apart from racing, attach to the sport of small-yacht sailing (for which amateur cruising is to all intents and purposes a synonym), it may fairly be said that they belong *par excellence* and in fullest measure to those who adventure out into open water, who are at all times 'glad to know the brine salt on their lips and the large air again,' and who captain and work their own ships with the assistance only of like-minded friends.

Amateur cruising has its drawbacks, but it is a fine school for the acquisition of seamanship, and the only one for the attainment of that confidence which distinguishes the master mariner. Anchor work is frequently not all play, and a three-reef breeze with a corresponding sea means business; yet, when all that is done has to be done by the amateur himself, he becomes more

of a sailor in a week than in half a dozen seasons of inclosed waters and well-known anchorages, or of languid luxury on deck watching a professional crew about its work. Navigation and, more especially, seamanship mean something on the west coast of Scotland, and the aneroid is not to be contemptuously disregarded.

It will occasionally be necessary, even during summer, to be able and willing to keep the sea, and a good boat helps to relieve one of the anxieties that accompany any extended cruising. A boat not less than twenty-seven feet over all—such a boat as the *Procyon*, or the *Perseus*, in which Mr. R. T. McMullen sailed down Channel, or such a boat as Mr. E. F. Knight's *Falcon*, in which he cruised to the Baltic—may be regarded as the type for comfort and of the necessary power. The boat in which we have ourselves cruised during two seasons between Ireland and the North Minch is of the *Falcon* type. Originally, like the *Falcon*, a diagonal-built teak lifeboat, she was cleared of the compartments, raised, decked, timbered, and given an iron keel of a ton in weight and two feet in depth, then ballasted in addition with another ton and a half of inside iron. A boat like this may be rigged as a yawl, but will do better as a snug cutter, and may be trusted, if handled even by fairly competent amateurs, to do all that will ever be required of her. She will beat off a lee shore in a strong wind and sea; will do two or three knots an hour to windward, if not sailed too fine; with the wind aft, abeam, or on the quarter will surprise the skippers of larger craft; and will gallop in the most delightful fashion and with marvellously dry decks over the crested rollers of the Atlantic or the North Minch.

Our boat is, of course, of the beamy, shallow-draught type—that is, about eight feet beam to twenty-seven of length, and drawing about four feet of water. It must be said, however, that in itself shallow draught possesses no special advantages on the west coast of Scotland, where shoal water is hardly to be met with, and the trouble generally is to find an anchorage in less than ten or fifteen fathoms. The narrow, heavily ballasted yacht of deep draught has, of course, qualities of her own. She will make scarcely appreciable leeway on a hard beat to windward; among the lochs of Skye, Argyll, Ross, or Inverness the puffs from the hills will not heave her down to such unusual angles of heel, and she is somewhat more at home on her beam-ends than the boat of lighter draught. The compensation is that in cruising proper, when canvased according to the true strength of the

THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CUT HER ADRIFT

wind, the comfort of a deck free from water and approximately horizontal can hardly be exaggerated. The beamy boat of lighter draught attains this comfort; and as for beating to windward, a draught of four feet secures very fair weatherly qualities in a cutter-rigged vessel of from twenty-five to thirty feet over all.

In the matter of accommodation I have never seen a yacht of anything like her size that can compare with our twenty-seven-foot cruiser. She has 4 ft. 6 in. head room, vast stowing accommodation, sleeping room for four persons, and a forecastle which looks like a ship's. Special thought was given to the ventilation, and the crew, often all below for hours, experienced the greatest comfort from the perfect circulation of air due to a small port on the starboard side of the forecastle (the forehatch was dispensed with as a source of weakness), a brass funnel ventilator, unshipped when at sea, just forward of the mast, also on the starboard, and the usual skylight.

The type of boat chosen by any yachtsman will of course depend upon his requirements and upon his tastes; but the difficulty of combining the speed and beauty of line displayed by a modern yacht with the accommodation, long floor, full ends, and lifting power indispensable in the sea boat, increases as the size of the boat diminishes. If a boat of thirty feet or less over all is to keep the sea, a good deal of prettiness must be sacrificed to security and comfort. For example, the freeboard must be of a height quite disproportionate to length in the true yacht type, and if the counter can be dispensed with, so much the better. The cutaway forefoot, too, is incompatible with the aforesaid security and comfort. The boat that is now-a-days called 'slow in stays,' and occasionally needs to be backed round with the foresail, may not suit the ideas of the yachtsman bred in racing waters; but she has her hour of triumph when the necessity arises for heaving to, or for running before a high and breaking sea.

Perhaps the most difficult problem in connection with small yachts is the dinghy problem. Our own experience inclines strongly to some collapsible type. We had for two seasons a beautiful little boat specially built for towing, there being no room on our decks for any punt. This little dinghy behaved perfectly in any kind of tolerable weather, and kept her nose well out of the water, so that when filled by a sea, most of what came on board washed out again over the stern.

But to tow a boat of any kind after a small yacht is to

HALF AN HOUR'S WARM EXCITEMENT

sacrifice a good knot or two an hour in speed, and some day she is bound to be lost. The end of our dinghy came on a passage from the Small Isles anchorage in Jura to Belfast. About six in the evening, when ten miles off the Mull of Cantire, a strong S.E. breeze sprang up, bringing with it thick mist and heavy rain, and 'gurly grew the sea.' All the Irish coast was, by the time we passed Fair Head, a lee shore lashed by heavy surf, and there was nothing for it but to claw off the land we wished to make, so little was the appearance of the coast appreciated, its features unrecognisable and looming dimly through the mist and driving rain. The breeze rapidly hardened to a gale, and the night was spent alternately heaving to, with the throat of the gaff lowered down to and lashed to the boom, and beating off the land on a S. by E. and SS.E. course, to make an offing when we judged that our drift was taking us too close in. The dirty night was succeeded by an even dirtier morning, and though, when the seas could be seen, we escaped many by manœuvring that would otherwise have sent water on board, the case of the dinghy was seen to be hopeless. While we were hove to, she lay quiet enough in her water-logged state; but when we bore up, and began to run in for the land to ascertain our position, the seas simply played a magnificent game of pitch and toss with her, bending our iron horse—to which the painter, almost a small hawser, was made fast—like a piece of wire, and threatening to rip up the deck planking of the yacht. The poor little dinghy was capsized, and then re-capsized back again by succeeding seas, only to be thrown bottom up once more. The drag and strain on the yacht were such that there was no alternative but to cut her adrift. It was with sore unwillingness that the sacrifice was made; and, failing to see how a boat can be saved under like circumstances, unless one is willing to lose a dinghy occasionally, a collapsible boat of some kind seems almost a necessity.

Most small yachts make their way to the west coast by way of the Crinan Canal, thus avoiding the Mull of Cantire; and their owners, for the most part, do not think it 'advisable'—in the phrase I once heard from one of them—to push west or north of Ardnamurchan. But it will be more to the mind of those who do not fear the strain and stress of 'the wind and the reeling main' to pass from the Irish Sea, through the North Channel, up to the Sound of Islay, and by Colonsay, Iona, and the Treshnish Isles to the northward. The Sound of Islay, though its tide runs at the somewhat fevered rate of five knots at springs, presents no serious difficulties, and may even be nego-

A Landing on Coll Island

tiated against tide with a strong and fair wind. From Rudha Mhail, the most northerly point of Islay, to Colonsay, from Colonsay to the south entrance of Iona Sound, is open sailing, where the fetch of the ocean swell is felt; but approaching Iona from the south presents real difficulties. As a glance at the chart will show, the ugly fangs of the dreaded Torranan rocks extend in all directions, and on the quietest day the sea is white with breakers for miles.

On all three occasions upon which we made this passage we had the services of a pilot—a measure of caution which will not be thought superfluous by those who know the place. On one of these occasions the painter of the pilot's boat, which was being towed astern of our own dinghy, parted in a brisk westerly squall. We had, as a result, half an hour's warm excitement in close proximity to rock and reef before we picked up the pilot's boat and our own dinghy, which had been manned and sent in pursuit. As was natural, just as with lowered peak we had gybed and were near enough to heave a line, the painter parted a second time, and the game began once more. The rapidity with which a boat goes to leeward in a fresh breeze, and how difficult it is to regain her, can perhaps only be appreciated by those who have had to do it where sea room is dangerously restricted to leeward, or where a few hundred yards on either tack will bring you uncomfortably near a rock marked by a spouting breaker.

The Sound of Iona is an uneasy anchorage, and, if used, the skipper must be on the alert and prepared to clear out on short notice. There is, however, Bunessan not far off; and on the Mull side of the Sound there is an excellent shelter entitled the Bull Hole, where coasters ride in comfort and in perfect security.

We made Iona the centre of some fine sailing excursions. Erraid, the scene of the shipwreck in Stevenson's 'Kidnapped,' an island lying at the south entrance of Iona Sound, is the signal and relief station for the lighthouses on Dubh Artach and Skerrynore, and repays a visit. Soay, also to the south, and the Treshnish Isles to the north, are like islands of romance. Isolated, wave-worn, fantastically shaped, and uninhabited save by multitudes of seals and, in myriads, the 'wheeling ocean fowl,' it might easily be fancied, when clambering among their crags or stretched at length upon a green slope hung between the rocks, that one had reached Ultima Thule and that the cities of civilisation smoked full a thousand miles away.

The Dutchman's Cap and Lunga are the two most interesting

of these islands, and we were so fascinated by the former that we paid it several visits. Staffa we cared less for, in spite of its caverns and curious columnar formation. We had been there on former occasions, and, moreover, by reason of the tourist steamer, the island has lost its awe-inspiring power and seems almost commonplace. From the point of view of the navigator, Staffa is an island to be approached only after consideration. The western side particularly had best be given a very wide berth indeed. On the eastern shore, when about to bring up off the Clam-shell Cave, we found a rock unexpectedly with the keel, and escaped serious injury, it may be said, accidentally.

Among the islands lying off the shores of Mull, Iona has, of course, no rival. The view from the slope upon which the cathedral stands possesses, the crew is agreed, a charm altogether its own and not to be matched by the far grander but far more gloomy outlooks among the hills of Skye and Inverness. Seen in the light of a westering sun, the shining sand, the emerald and purple water of the Sound, the red rocks of Mull, the trap terraces of Bourg under the mighty shadow of Ben More, and, far away, the green heights of Ulva and Colonsay the Less, make up a picture that needs no touch 'for beauty's heightening.' Iona has, of course, a magnificent and unique historical tradition; and in one who can spend there a day or two, undisturbed by the tourist who infests it for an hour daily during the season of the Oban steamer, it can hardly fail to arouse the sentiment associated with the historical sense. The galleys that brought, for many a hundred years, the warrior kings and fierce chiefs of the northern kingdoms, anchored in this bay; up this Street of the Dead moved the funeral processions; and that little plot of ground that looks out from the hill-side upon the sea is rich in the dust of many a king and abbot and lord of the isles.

Going north from Iona one passes Tiree and Coll, Caliach Point with its tide race, and Ardnamurchan with its confused sea, due to the backwash from the western swell. Ardnamurchan is the more talked of, but Caliach seemed to us a less pleasant point to round. After passing the anchorage that lies between Gometra and Ulva, the yachtsman bound north will find Eigg, the last point of call, an interesting little island dominated by its precipitous and striking scaur.

The western shore of Skye is indented by a series of lochs, whose scenery is unsurpassed for savage grandeur; but we chose the eastern side and the passage through the Narrows, the direct route to the north. It is hopeless to attempt the passage through

Kyle Rhea, whatever the wind, until the tide is favourable; and if the wind is light or flawy, one generally makes the passage in undignified fashion when steerage way is lost, broadside on or even stern foremost. We likened the mountains of Skye seen from Kyle Akin to a group of saturnine witches putting their heads together for the purpose of brewing bad weather. Grand indeed they are, but grand in gloom, and to the yachtsman they seem ever threatening, and in the waters over which they preside short canvas is desirable. Most yachts are over-canvased for regular cruising, and the difficulties and dangers attendant on small-yacht sailing are marvellously reduced by snug canvas and by simplicity in gear. It is often astonishing how the very aspect of the weather seems to change with the lowering of the foresail and the taking down of a reef. In a rough sea and strong breeze a small yacht may seem a poor enough sea-boat if hard pressed, when all she needs to prove her real capacity is a reduction of sail. Not infrequently, when a reef or two is taken down, what appeared a few minutes ago half a gale of wind is found to be no more than a fresh exhilarating breeze.

North of Skye is once more open sailing, and the stronger tides are left astern until the Pentland Firth, with its appalling complexities, to judge from the Sailing Directions, of eddies and races is reached. The successful navigation of the north coast and the Pentland Firth was to have been our last achievement, and the charts had been carefully studied; but time failed us, and our trusty little craft has yet to pass through the troubled waters that lie around Swona and Stroma.

The inner sounds of Mull, Loch Linnhe and Jura, and the tides of the Dorus Mor that border on far-thundering Corrievrechan, are too familiar to yachtsmen to merit notice here. It may not, indeed, be superfluous to note that, however light the draught of his boat, no yachtsman should attempt Clachan Sound. We adventured there on a run from Oban to Crinan on one occasion as an experiment. It proved disastrous. We got through indeed, but at the cost of a day hard aground and an unhappy night with warps and anchors, which we have decided is on no condition to be repeated.

The west coast of Scotland, it will be seen, is not one of those cruising grounds where, to quote Mr. R. T. McMullen, 'the sea is neither rough, salt, nor deep—a sort of Elysium, where you anchor when you please, eat and drink when and what you please, and live for the time being in perpetual enjoyment of the sun, moon, and stars.' But, provided the voyage be undertaken in the

right kind of boat, a tiny cruiser may dare and triumph over every danger and difficulty from the Mull of Cantire to Cape Wrath. And what a range and variety of sailing and scenery is here! In half a dozen seasons the yachtsman will not exhaust it, nor, it may safely be asserted, explore half of its countless lochs, or land on half its islands. Like the names of the famous Italian cities, Florence and Parma, Ravenna, Mantua, Verona, Milan, the very names on the west coast have a music that ought to prove the irresistible summons of beauty. Who can withstand the fascination of such sounds as Islay, Colonsay, Iona, Ulva, Dunvegan, Morven, or the Summer Isles?

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

In an article elsewhere in this number on 'Some Recent St. Legers,' I remarked that of runners for the race only about twenty per cent. were fillies. It is well to be quite accurate, and as much as possible to avoid 'abouts,' which betoken somewhat slipshod preparation; so I have been carefully through the runners for the last twenty-five Legers—a quarter of a century seemed a fair period to take—and I find that my rough estimate was extraordinarily near the mark. Here are the figures:—

Year	Colts	Fillies	Year	Colts	Fillies
1872	16	1	1886	7	—
1873	7	1	1887	9	—
1874	10	3	1888	11	5
1875	13	—	1889	11	1
1876	8	1	1890	13	2
1877	12	2	1891	8	1
1878	12	2	1892	10	1
1879	15	2	1893	6	1
1880	9	3	1894	5	3
1881	12	3	1895	8	3
1882	10	4	1896	7	—
1883	9	—		244	46
1884	10	3			
1885	6	4			

Now as 100 : 20 :: 244 to 48; and it will be seen that during the last twenty-five years exactly forty-six fillies have started. On five occasions not a single mare has gone to the post. La Flêche was the only starter of her sex, and she won. Her sister, Memoir, was one of two fillies, the second so rank an outsider, as noted elsewhere, that she was never mentioned in betting which extended to 1000 to 6. In 1884 three fillies ran, and a couple of them, Sandiway and Superba, finished second and third. There were four fillies in 1882, and three of them—Dutch Oven, Geheimniss, and Shotover—occupied the first three places. In Jannette's year she was one of two mares; two also ran the year following, Lady Golightly and Manœuvre, and they were second and third. Of eight starters in 1873 only one was a mare, but her name was Marie Stuart. There cannot be much difference between the number of colts and of fillies that are born from year to year, and there is no great disproportion between the colts and fillies that are entered for the Leger. Why, then, is it that so few of the latter run, seeing that of those who are sent to the post such a considerable average distinguish themselves? This is a problem which always puzzles me. Can any ingenious reader help to solve it?

A correspondent asks if I will give 'a little handicap of the dozen or so best two-year-olds that have been out so far,' as he does not quite agree with any of the published estimates that he has seen so far. I hesitate, however, because how else except by guesswork can one sum up such animals as Champ de Mars, Cyllene, Longtown, Orzil, the improving Cap Martin and a few more? It is a melancholy thing that neither of the first two is in the Derby next year, and the friends of their owners will sympathise with the omission, which is the more exasperating for Mr. Douglas Baird and Mr. Charles Rose because each owns the sire of his good colt. My own idea is that these two are the best, though I have great respect for Longtown. Mr. Leonard Brassey's Orzil I do not like. He has fine speed, there can be no doubt, but is, I think, a 'flash,' irritable beast that will never stay. On the last day of this month Cyllene and Champ de Mars might run, if their owners desired it, in the Champion Breeders' Biennial Foal Stakes at Derby, but whether they are likely to do so I have missed the opportunity of asking. If they do, it will be a race worth going a long way to see, especially as Longtown is also entered and might

be sent to oppose them. I am still, however, expecting the appearance of some 'dark' youngster—we might see one in the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster.

Why is it that interest in boat racing has so notably decreased of late years? It need scarcely be insisted upon that of all British sports none is more admirable from every possible point of view. It is a well-nigh ideal athletic exercise, for I do not for a moment believe that the cry which was raised some time ago about mischiefs arising from over-training, weakened hearts, and so on, can have had any effect. Skill and style both tell as they do in all the best sports, and Englishmen seem to take naturally to boats of all varieties. Rowing, too, is a pastime very generally practised at all large schools that are within reach of a river; the Oxford and Cambridge boat race gives it a fillip every year, and so does Henley, not to mention some of the other neighbouring regattas. But if you ask the next ordinarily well-informed man you meet a few questions about contemporary scullers, amateur and professional, and seek a little knowledge, say, about the championship of the Thames, the chances are you will find that he is entirely ignorant of the subject. Yet I can remember when excitement ran high about contests between Thames and Tyne, when promising amateurs were keenly discussed, and the form of eights and fours from the principal clubs was generally known. Everyone is familiar with the names of the best cricketers, and, furthermore, is acquainted with the branches of the game in which their powers are displayed—whether they are bowlers, wicket-keepers, or batsmen; but there is no such current knowledge of boating.

I have another way of testing the relative popularity of various sports and pastimes—by the proportion of papers on the different subjects which are offered to me for publication. Fishing comes first; the 'contemplative man' is very fond of describing his 'recreation;' and shooters of big game are often inclined to describe their experiences. Big-game articles are almost as plentiful as papers on fishing. Cyclists frequently wish to give accounts of tours, and I have a fair proportion of essays on Turf affairs, the peculiarity of which is that the writers seldom know

very much about the subject on which they are anxious to proclaim their ideas. I am daily offered papers on all sorts of games and pastimes; sailing and cruising are treated from all possible points of view, as readers know; but in the multitudes of suggestions that are offered, and of MSS. that are sent (for some contributors disregard the petition that they will write first and see what prospect there is of acceptance for what they want to send), anything about rowing is altogether exceptional.

With reference to an article by Mr. Beach Thomas in a recent number, Mr. H. O. D. Davidson writes to me: 'I have just happened to see your May number, in which there is an article on Inter-'Varsity Athletics. Speaking of long jumping, the writer says, "The secret of his (Greig's) success lay in the height he rose from the ground. In the same way, Fry, in his record leap of 23 ft. 6½ in., was said to have been as much as 5 ft. off the ground at the top of the curve." The following incident, which I well remember in my school days, may be of interest to you as confirming your theory. In the Harrow School Sports of 1893, F. J. Wood, who had succeeded in clearing 5 ft. 5 in. in practice, failed to get higher than 5 ft. 4 in., a good enough jump for a boy of 17 or 18. As a last chance he determined to "fly" it, took a long run, got up full speed, and cleared the bar by a good two inches. We measured the jump from the spot he took off to the spot he came down, and it was 18 ft. 4 in. Although I have seen a good many fine jumps, I always think that the finest I ever saw, not even excepting Brooks's jump of 6 ft. 2½ in., as it was executed in perfect form, as if rising over a hurdle 5 ft. 5 in. in height.'

People make quaint mistakes sometimes when they do not quite hit the mark. I found on the table of one of my clubs the other day a book containing the personal recollections of Mr. Charles K. Tuckerman, First Minister Resident of the United States to Greece. He had been to England, and was describing one phase of a series of country visits—the expenses. 'The guest,' he says, 'must take with him a private servant, and not infrequently his own horses, and he must be prepared to pay golden fees to all the servants who have been of use to him, including stablemen and masters of hounds if he engages in field sports.'

It would strike one as a little odd to see an affable stranger ride up to Lord Lonsdale, or Lord Radnor, or the Duke of Sutherland, and present him with a couple of sovereigns! One wonders how a man of ordinary observation can stay in English country houses from which men hunt, can go out hunting himself, and not understand what a master of hounds is.

They are racing now—at the beginning of the present month—in Mashonaland. The 'Mashonaland Turf Club' sounds curious; but it exists, and is to hold a 'Spring Meeting' on Monday the 6th and Saturday the 11th of September. There is on the first day the Mashonaland Handicap of 1,200*l.*, of which 200*l.* goes to the second horse. Nomination 15 sovs.; acceptance 25 sovs. Distance 1½ mile. That is all the information I find in the programme some one has very kindly sent me; there is nothing about ages, weights, or penalties. The conditions of some of the other races are also a little vague. The Merchants' Plate, for instance, is 'of 200 sovs.; entrance 15 sovs. Weight for age, increased 14 lb. Winner of the Mashonaland Handicap, 14 lb. extra. Distance about 1 mile.' The meeting is held under the Rules of Racing and the Regulations of the Jockey Club of South Africa, and something about weight for age may, no doubt, be found there; but I do not quite understand what is meant by 'increased 14 lb.'? There is a 'Salisbury Handicap' of 800 sovs., and a 'Kopje Selling Plate' of 100 sovs. Jump races are included in the programme. A hurdle race, value 100 sovs., over six flights of 3 ft. 6 in. hurdles—a modest undertaking—and a steeplechase worth 200 sovs., 20 sovs. to the second, distance about two miles over eight jumps. Englishmen *will* go racing. I wonder what the Mashonas think of the sport?

By a slip of the pen the article called 'A Chapter of Accidents' in the last number was attributed to Mr. 'Anthony' Gibbs. The sportsman who had experienced, and made record of, the various disasters in the hunting field therein described was Mr. 'Arthur' Gibbs, and the credit due to him is hereby restored.

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CUB-HUNTING

BY C. E. A. L. RUMBOLD

BEFORE these lines appear in print, the sound of horn and hound will have been heard throughout the length and breadth of the land. Puppy-shows will have been long since over, and November, that month dear to the heart of the fox-hunter, will once more be within measurable distance. But before we again don the regulation 'pink,' much valuable work will have to be performed by masters of hounds and their respective staffs, in which many of us will not participate; for it is becoming more and more the fashion among hunting men not to indulge in their sport till the season is well advanced. But surely this is a mistake; for cub-hunting is essentially a time of preparation and instruction, not only for hounds and horses, but also for ourselves; for how can we expect to withstand the fatigues of long days in November if we have not had any previous training to get our muscles into order? For this latter purpose there is surely no better way of obtaining condition than to take part in the pleasures of autumn hunting, for it gives us a splendid opportunity of gradually getting accustomed to being many hours in the saddle after a summer perhaps devoted to the London season, yachting, cricket, or other similar amusements.

Some authorities have recommended evening cubbing; but it is now the universal practice not to let the sun rise very far above

the horizon before hounds are thrown into cover. This practice in a great measure accounts for the very few sportsmen that are to be seen at the coverside on a September morning. To some men it is no more trouble to be up at five than three or four hours later, while, alas! to some of us it is no easy matter to summon up our courage to face the first fence.

Perhaps the worst of getting up very early is having to dress by artificial light, for it conveys a decidedly morbid impression to our half-roused faculties, and there is something uncanny about the whole thing which we can scarcely explain. Possibly in our sleepy mind we unconsciously connect the present with some gruesome story of the past that we had read to us years ago of how some worthy martyr rose thus early to prepare for something worse than a morning's cubbing. Our very breeches seem cold and uncharitable as we draw them on, and when by the aid of the now fast gathering light we get into our boots and adjust our spurs, which gleam in a mysterious way in the semi-darkness, we turn one longing look towards our deserted resting-place, and declare that we have been very foolish ever to leave it.

But things assume a brighter appearance as we proceed downstairs, for through the already opened front door or window we catch a breath of pure morning air, which seems to put new life into us, and we no longer experience any difficulty in keeping our eyes open. Breakfast, again, further tends to revive us, and by the time our horse is brought round to the door we feel as lively as that worthy steed himself, which the sharp air has rendered more playful than he was under the hot midday sun of yesterday.

By the time that we have got well under way it is broad daylight; the now quickly rising sun is beginning to pierce through the morning mist, and causes the valleys in particular to present a very curious appearance, as the thick vapour that has previously enveloped them gradually rolls upwards like the huge curtain of a gigantic stage. As we trot along we begin to realise what a pleasant thing it is to have an early ride, and make good resolves—often to be broken—for the future. We every now and then meet labourers going to their work; the older among them respectfully touch their hats, the younger, under the influence of a better education, merely stare. Our road now lies along the brow of a low hill, and we know that the valley beyond contains the trysting-place of the hunt. Suddenly our horse, who for the last few yards has been walking, stands

suddenly stock still, pricks his ears, and snuffs the air. Ah! what is that glad sound which strikes our ears and sets our pulses throbbing with renewed vigour? When did we hear it last? What a host of recollections crowd before our delighted senses! And, as we once more trot on, we see a little brown object dart out of the cover to our right, and as quickly enter it again.

Then the full chorus of the approaching pack is heard, now with a greater intensity as they draw nearer. They clear the low

PLAYFUL

hedge out of cover, and throw up in the field beyond; and then for a minute all is silence, until some hound, older and wiser than the others, hits off the line where the fox had retraced his steps into the wood. Our horse now occupies all our attention, for he seems suddenly to have become like an animal possessed, and we have to use all our skill to restrain him as we seek the valley beneath. When we arrive at our destination we find few others there—half a dozen farmers perhaps, a horse-dealer or

two, and a sprinkling of local landowners. Later on in the morning the number will be augmented by three or four ladies and some of the other members of the hunt. Meanwhile the pack have a strong litter on foot, which they are rattling round and round the adjoining covers; whilst ever and anon a cub, more adventurous than the rest, will make a short journey in the open, which gives us an excuse for jumping a fence or two before we once more find ourselves at the coverside.

If we have done our duty, and have walked a couple of puppies during the past winter, the pleasure of cubbing is nearly doubled, for we now have a chance of seeing what our favourites can do, and if the opinions we formed of their respective merits when we sent them in during the preceding spring are likely to be fulfilled. The puppy, perhaps, that was then the most nervous in the presence of strangers now exhibits the most dash, while the one upon whom we set our affections scarcely seems to take that interest in the work which we should have anticipated. What a difference, too, there is in their appearance! When we saw them last they were big and fat; at the present time, as we view them from our horse's back, they seem to have grown smaller, whilst their muscles stand out in strong relief now that the superfluous flesh is no longer there. So the morning draws quickly on as we stand watching the hounds at work, and discussing the harvest or the chances of sport in the coming season, and where the biggest litters may be expected to be found.

Presently the huntsman gallops by, and as he does so he informs us that the cub to which the hounds have been devoting their energies for the last half-hour is nearly beaten, and not long afterwards he is accounted for. The young entry are duly blooded, we in the meantime being pleased to observe that the puppies which we walked have obtained their share of the spoil. A short consultation now ensues as to the advisability of drawing again, but the master decides to go home, as the sun is high and the dew has disappeared. The hounds also are tired after their morning's work, and the scent, which was good when we began to hunt, has been growing gradually worse. Having ascertained where the next cubbing fixtures are to be, we turn our horse's head homewards, and we jog slowly along in the increasing heat; for now that the excitement is over we feel the least bit tired, and our horse reciprocates our feelings. As we ride onward we think that the little inconveniences which had to be endured in the early morning are fully atoned for by the sport which we have enjoyed. On arriving

AN EXCUSE FOR JUMPING A FENCE OR TWO

home we sit down to a substantial lunch, to which we do full justice, for that early morning ride has whetted the appetite. After lunch—well, if it must be confessed—we have just the proverbial forty winks, for we begin to feel fatigued from our unusual exercise. Afterwards we stroll round the stables to see how our horse has fared, and are greatly pleased to observe that

THE YOUNG ENTRY ARE DULY BLOODED

he is none the worse for his unwonted exertions. For the rest of the day we feel on good terms with everyone, including ourselves, and if the next morning we are a little stiff, what of that?

The time that cub-hunting should be started must of course vary tremendously in different parts of the kingdom, for in a country where there are many big woodlands cubbing can be

begun much earlier than in an arable country with small covers. Again, in the southern counties the harvest is over, generally speaking, quite six weeks before it is in the north.

Peter Beckford, in his 'Thoughts upon Hunting,' says, 'I begin to hunt with my young hounds in August,' and he then goes on to observe that in the foregoing months his huntsman turns down a cat before them, which they hunt up to, and kill—an act which would now most righteously cause him to have the S.P.C.A. on his track in no time. Seeing a cat broken up by a pack of fox-hounds must have been a horribly cruel and degrading exhibition, but I suppose people thought differently in 1779 to what they do in 1897. It gives us a very curious insight into the last century, and tends to show what ideas as to cruelty were then held by a gentleman as accomplished as Beckford undoubtedly was. What would be thought of an M.F.H. at the present day who advocated in a work on hunting the turning down of a cat in front of hounds? But later on Beckford got pulled up on a question of brutality. After recommending that a badger should be let out before hounds after they begin to love a scent, in order that one may be able to discover what improvement they have made, he writes as follows: 'You should give him a great deal of law, and you will do well to break his teeth.' A writer in the 'Monthly Review' says of this passage, 'There is neither justice nor equity in breaking his teeth.' Beckford rather lamely replies, 'I confess there is not, and I never know that it is done, but I feel all the force of the observation.' It is a custom 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance.' Beckford, although he started his cubbing early, did not begin to hunt in earnest till September, and from other remarks he makes we may come to the conclusion that he never let his hounds go far out of cover until October was well advanced. When the Duke of Richmond kept hounds he used to begin cubbing in July, after the Goodwood meeting, and as he also killed a May fox, his hounds hunted in every month of the year except June.

Every cover in a country known to contain a litter of cubs should be visited, if possible, twice before November 1 arrives, for there is nothing more irritating than to have to hunt foxes, after the regular season has begun, that have never been bustled about before. On the other hand, foxes that have received a good dusting in their younger days will be on the alert directly they hear the sound of the horn again, and will want no second reminder to quit the cover. In hunting a big woodland, which is at the same time a great stronghold of foxes, it is a good plan to

visit it on two consecutive mornings, as this will tend more thoroughly to distribute the cubs over the neighbouring country than by hunting in such a place at long intervals.

At the same time no harm would arise, for foxes always retire to the big covers as Christmas approaches, as by that time there is not, as a general rule, much undergrowth left in small spinnies and similar places. When these large woods cannot be hunted, owing to the game they contain, until late in the season, the M.F.H. is of course at a great disadvantage; but the inevitable must be accepted.

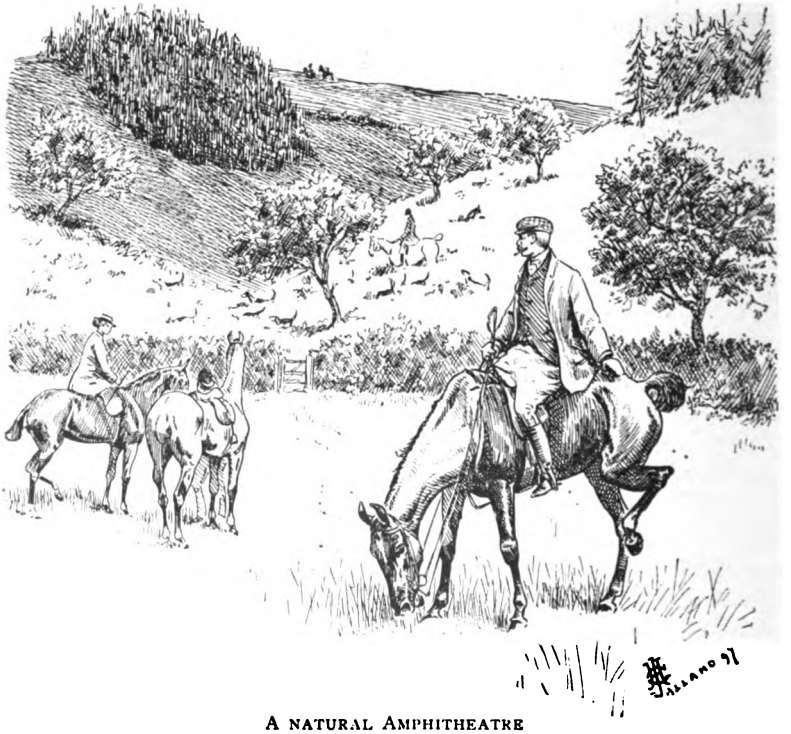
It is never advisable to take old horses out cubbing, or at any rate until October has arrived, for the ground is usually very hard in September, and this will soon find out any weaknesses left over from the past season. On the other hand, no better opportunity can be seized for teaching a young horse his business, for he can be gradually brought to the work. There is none of that hurry and bustle, such as is experienced later on, and is calculated to make a horse hot-headed, unless he has received some previous instruction. The occasional little spins in the open give us an admirable opportunity to teach our four-year-old to jump, as we can afford to let him take his time at his fences, and there is no great crowd to flurry him. The long waits by the coverside all tend to make him temperate, and he becomes by degrees accustomed to those various sights and sounds in the hunting-field that at first tended both to alarm and disturb him.

For the novice also, no better occasion can be found to enable him to learn what hunting really is. He can observe at his leisure what the huntsman is doing, as well as noting the work of the hounds, and the different tactics pursued by the fox to evade his pursuers. I will even go so far as to say that he would acquire more knowledge of the science of hunting by closely watching the cubbing operations of a provincial pack for half a dozen mornings, than he would by spending a season in the shires.

Most of us have our ideal place for cub-hunting, which either exists in the country in which we hunt, or in our imagination. Huntsmen, as a rule, like big woods, for they help to steady hounds; in fact, a pack can scarcely be brought to perfection unless they have some large covers in which the cubs can be hunted. Nothing is more liable to make puppies wild than drawing small covers where foxes are plentiful; young hounds will not work properly, and are continually listening for a holloa. The disadvantage of large covers lies in the fact that in them it

is most difficult for a whipper-in to get to the pack in the event of riot occurring; but if hounds are judiciously exercised in the summer time in places where hares, deer, &c. are known to be in large quantities, no great trouble ought to be experienced, even with the puppies when they are left more to themselves.

From a spectacular point of view no better situation can be found for cub-hunting than one of those narrow horseshoe-shaped valleys which are to be seen in many parts of England. I mean one where the low hills on each side are covered with



A NATURAL AMPHITHEATRE

small trees and thick undergrowth. A kind of natural amphitheatre is thus formed, and if we stand on the low ground in the middle, we are able to see the hounds working around us; and at the same time, if they are allowed to go away for a short gallop, we have a splendid opportunity of being able to get with them. On a blustering September morning also, we are well sheltered from the wind, whilst if we were in a large wood we should only see hounds occasionally, and we should never be able to hear where they were owing to the rustling of the leaves.

In conclusion it may be said that if cub-hunting has none of that glorious excitement about it that is felt in fox-hunting proper, for lovers of hound work, and those who appreciate an early morning ride, there are few things more enjoyable. Nature is also to be seen in her best guise, for what can be more beautiful than the autumn tints of the woodlands, which later on will be gone, and nothing be left but the bare branches of the trees, that in September and October represented all colours, from the darkest copper to the lightest brown? Whilst cub-hunting we are looking forward to the good things to come; but if, as many writers would have us believe, expectation is better than realisation, this cubbing must be more enjoyable than 'the sport of kings' itself. For, after all, to quote the well-known lines:

Desire attained is no desire,
But as the cinders of the fire.

THE ETON AND HARROW MATCH

BY R. D. WALKER

THE Eton and Harrow match this year ended once again in a draw; and as everybody seems agreed that something must be done to try and bring the match to a definite conclusion, while they differ widely as to what that something is to be, an examination of the different suggestions that have been made may help to clear the ground. It seems strange that Rugby and Marlborough and Haileybury and Cheltenham nearly always succeed in bringing their games to a finish, though they play no longer hours than, if as long as, the two older schools. There is, perhaps, a greater waste of time between the innings and after the luncheon interval at the Eton and Harrow, but this is to be accounted for by the promenading which takes place, so that the ground cannot be so quickly cleared; but, after all, the difference in time is not so great as to account for the match under consideration being drawn year after year, and it must be excessively annoying to those who devote so much time and trouble to coaching the two elevens to feel at the start that, even given fine weather throughout the two days, the chances are considerably in favour of the game not being played out.

As far as public opinion has expressed itself in the daily and sporting papers, it would seem pretty generally agreed that there are the proverbial three courses open:—

1. To have three days instead of two set apart for the match.

2. To change the venue from Lord's, and to play alternate years on each other's ground, in the same way as Eton and Winchester now do.

3. To restore the match to the time it used to be played in from 1805 to 1855, viz. the holidays.

With regard to the first of these alternatives, those who advocate its adoption say that under the present arrangements too long hours are entailed on the boys, and that it is unreasonable to ask them to play from eleven to seven, or possibly half-past, on the second day, when men play only from twelve to seven on the first and half-past eleven to seven on the remaining days (or, according to arrangements in county matches, half-past six). The two schools have, however, played these same long hours for many years; and, as far as is known, no complaint has ever been made by the elevens themselves that the work is too severe—in fact, to schoolboys in good health and training three hours before lunch and four hours afterwards ought not to put too great a strain on their powers of endurance. A full hour might be allowed from two to three, and in no case should play be continued after seven. The objections which have been brought forward as to the side that has the worst of the game playing for a draw are absurd, and have been well met by Mr. Denison in his letter to the 'Field' of August 14. He says: 'What is a side to do when it is so situated that, however well it may bat, it has not time to get the required runs, whilst there is plenty of time for it to get out? Many spectators seem to think that they have a right to dictate the style of play to be adopted, and that the business of a batsman is to amuse or excite them, whatever effect such a performance may have on the fortunes of the match, quite forgetting that an eleven owes a duty to the club which it represents, and can perform it only by playing that game which, under the circumstances, is the correct one.'

This is excellent, and though greatly disappointed as an old Harrovian at the result of the match this year, I consider too much credit cannot be given to the Eton batsmen, who, when half their side were out and their chances looked hopeless, made such a determined stand, and would not run any risks of losing their wickets, knowing full well that they could not possibly win, but might very easily lose if they played too forward a game. One of the chief causes of these constant draws (and I am not referring now to the Eton and Harrow match alone) is, if I may use the phrase, the *unnatural* excellence of the wickets. No one wishes to go back to the old days at Lord's, when the ball sometimes cleared both batsman's and wicket-keeper's heads, if it did not hit one of them in the eye, and the next minute, instead of perpetrating the same antics, shot dead; but, as the Rev. F. G. Pelham says in his letter

to the 'Times,' 'The wicket might be every bit as true and free from kicking as before if only the groundsmen were instructed to have real green grass on the wickets.' The mowing machine and heavy roller are mainly answerable for the present state of the wickets. The former cuts the blades too close, and after the latter has been over the ground a few times all the *natural life* is completely taken out of it.

Mention has been made above of the ball shooting, and it is a matter of great regret that the state of the wickets at the present day absolutely prevents a shooter being bowled; for there is no danger to the person of a batsman in such a ball, and it requires great skill and careful watching to prevent its being fatal to his wicket. If, instead of the mowing machine, we revert to the old system of sheep feeding, we shall still get quite true enough wickets, and the bowlers will have a fair chance. With regard to the inroad made in the school work by an additional day being granted for the match, it is not the province of this article to inquire into. At present, it appears from published correspondence that the head master of Harrow is willing to allow a third day, whilst the head master of Eton declines to sanction such a course; and considering the numerous encroachments made on the school work by Henley, Bisley, and the Eton and Winchester match, one cannot be surprised at his reluctance to acquiesce in the proposal. Another strong objection to the extension scheme is that it means another day's picnic.

The fact is that the match has now become more or less (chiefly more) a fashionable gathering of so-called smart London society. Probably I am understating the numbers when I affirm that fully one-third of those who attend Lord's on the Eton and Harrow match days not only do not look at the cricket, but absolutely take no interest in it. It is true that there is not such utter ignorance rampant as used to prevail in the earlier days, when the match first became a social function, and when many ladies thought that one Eton and one Harrow boy occupied the opposing wickets, that the top scoring-board marked the Eton runs and the lower the Harrow, and that the two sedate-looking gentlemen in long white coats were the respective head masters of the two schools; but still there is the greatest indifference to the proceedings of the players, and the majority of the carriage occupants look upon Lord's ground on these two days much as they do on the Park and Hurlingham, &c.—as a convenient rendezvous, with luncheons, teas, and general gossip thrown in. It is an undisputed fact that since the match attained its unenviable notoriety hundreds of

candidates have been elected with the sole view of being able to procure seats and carriage tickets, and the great majority of them would no more think of going to see Gentlemen *v.* Players, or any first-class match, than they would of walking or driving in Regent's instead of Hyde Park. It would be an excellent thing if a stop were put to the carriages round the ground. They occupy space which might profitably be given up to additional seats, and a great many more of those really interested in the two schools could be accommodated. Of course a large number of old Etonians and Harrovians have seats given them by member-friends, but it is not an uncommon thing to meet many who have to wander aimlessly round the ground, who, as far as the play is concerned, get most of their information from the telegraph-boards and cards, and who think themselves fortunate if in the course of their peregrinations they catch a glimpse now and again of the actual players over a low carriage. Besides these hardly used individuals, there are many who do not come up to Lord's because they are unable to procure seats, and know they would see next to nothing of the game. To put the matter shortly, the Eton and Harrow is no longer a *bonâ-fide* contest between the two schools. It is an *omnium gatherum* of London society; and such being the case, both in the interests of cricket and, particularly, of the schools themselves, an additional day is to be greatly deprecated.

In favour of the second proposition—changing the venue to Eton and Harrow alternately—there is a good deal to be said. In these days of easy and rapid locomotion no great difficulties present themselves in getting from one school to the other early in the morning and back at night; and the fact that one would be the hosts and the other the guests is an additional guarantee (if any were wanted) that the match would in such a case be played in a generous spirit. It has been objected that the Harrow ground is somewhat difficult for strangers to play upon, the wickets being slightly on an incline, and not the truest of pitches; but, on the other hand, any stranger, playing for the first time at Eton, who has been accustomed to a good light, would find himself equally puzzled by the close proximity of the trees, and very apt to lose sight of the ball after it has left the bowler's hand; whilst in the late afternoon, when the sun is going down, the shadows cast by the trees are very baulking to those unaccustomed to them. Moreover, as a rule, the wickets are much deader and slower than at Harrow; so that really each school would have, as is usually the case on its own ground, a decided advantage to start with.

It has also been said that the removal of the match from Lord's would seriously impoverish the M.C.C. coffers. This reads like a joke, and was probably intended for one. If really meant, the propounder of such a statement must have been ignorant of the resources of the M.C.C., which is probably one of the richest sporting clubs in the world, and if necessary would be able to recoup itself in many ways for the loss of the school profits; though the question of money-making in connection with the University and School matches is such a repugnant idea that it should not be entertained for a moment. The county clubs, of course, have to consider the question of £ *s. d.*, and a good match extending to a third day means a welcome addition to their funds; but M.C.C., with its four thousand members and an unlimited candidate list, can well afford to be above all mercenary considerations. At the same time, the removal from Lord's would be a great upsetting of all the old traditions under which the match has hitherto been played, and there are many who feel that they would not like to see it, except on the old ground which has been consecrated by immemorial custom, though at the same time they equally feel that it would be an improvement to the manner and conditions under which it is now carried on. For, at any rate, no one would take the trouble to go down to Eton or Harrow who was not keenly interested in the contest, and in the absence of the luncheon and tea brigade the spectators would be almost entirely limited to the boys themselves and their relatives, with a large gathering of old boys, to whom a visit to the scenes of their youth would be an additional attraction.

There remains the only other course to be adopted, and that is to restore the match to the time at which it was always played up to the year 1855, viz. the first week of the holidays. A few words may not be out of place as to the reasons for the change of time having ever been made, for an interval of forty-two years represents two generations, and it is not possible for the cricketers of the present day to realise the spirit and ardour which accompanied the contests when Eton, Winchester, and Harrow met in friendly rivalry, and each match was *played to a finish.* In those days the Winchester vacation began two or three weeks earlier than at the other schools, and it involved either the Winchester eleven staying in town for that period, or returning to town for the matches from their homes in the middle of the holidays. That this was a most inconvenient arrangement cannot be denied, and dissatisfaction having arisen, Winchester retired from the contest in 1854. Eton and Harrow continued to play as usual in

1855, when the head master of Eton followed the example of Winchester, and declined to allow the match to proceed on the old lines. There were never any objections on the part of Harrow, but in consequence of Eton's withdrawal there was no match in 1856. A kind of nondescript match, limiting the age of the players, was played in 1857, and no boys who were going to return to the schools took part in it. A general feeling of regret had been steadily growing that the old-established contest had fallen through, so in 1858 it was arranged that the two schools should meet for a two days' match on the second Friday and Saturday in July.

From that year it has been played without a break, and has gradually become one of the features of the London season; but out of the forty matches, *fifteen* have been unfinished (there has been no definite result since 1893); and, as far as one can judge, the chances are rather in favour of a draw every year under the present conditions. It seems much more reasonable that these contests should take place in the holidays, for many reasons. Though the cult and worship of athletics generally have been making great headway in the last twenty years (and probably no one will deny that the captain of the cricket eleven at a public school possesses much greater influence, and is much more looked up to by his fellows, than the actual head of the school, however great his abilities), one cannot but feel that the primary object of school life is mental work and improvement, and that the cricket ground, the football field, the racquet courts, &c., are, and ought to be, the secondary consideration in term time, invaluable though they are in preserving the *mens sana in corpore sano*. Now, within three weeks of breaking-up for the holidays comes the cricket match at Lord's, and how can boys be expected to settle down to work after this excitement? A small boy probably summed up the situation truly and tersely when he said, 'Oh! after Lord's it is all rot.' The head master of Haileybury, a celebrated Eton cricketer in his time, in his letter to the 'Times' of July 24 says:—

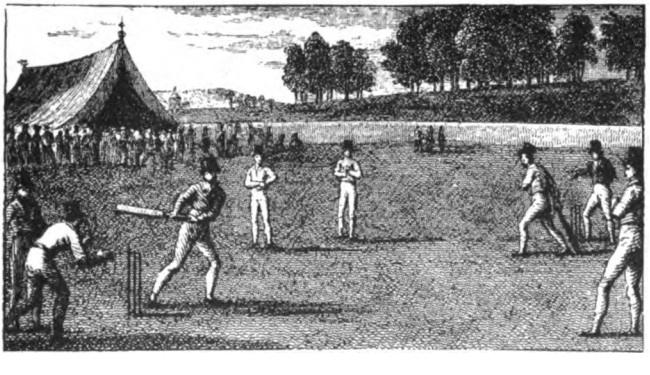
'I have never doubted since I was an Eton boy that the colossal fuss made over this match operates powerfully in imbuing the boys with exaggerated ideas of the place athletics ought to hold in their idea of life.' The present Master of Trinity, who played for Harrow under the old *régime*, would doubtless be one of the first to admit that the contests in his day were more satisfactory from every point of view than they were during his head mastership at Harrow; and surely the present heads and under-masters

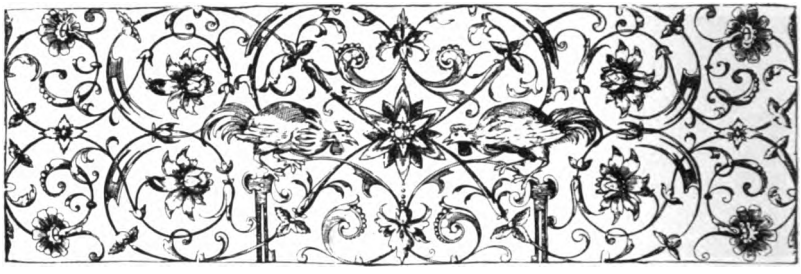
of the respective schools, many of whom are keen cricketers, must feel that, if there is to be a time for work and a time for play, the holidays are the proper time for the latter. The remark has been made, 'Oh! if you have the match in the holidays, the season is over, and nearly everybody will have gone out of town.' And a good thing too, if they take so little interest in the match that they don't think it worth waiting for unless it suits their own convenience. This absence of *everybody* would be a great comfort to all those who are really interested, and who would, if possible, make their arrangements to suit the match.

The loss of the picnickers we should have to deplore, of course. They would be at Cowes, or scattered over the Continent at the various drinking establishments, after their arduous work, as for really smart society it is not quite the thing to be seen in town in August. But the parents and guardians of the players would be sure to do their best; and everybody has friends in town who would gladly take charge of the elevens, even if the parents could not be there themselves. Rugby played Marlborough in their holidays. Haileybury played Cheltenham in theirs. Both matches were finished, and everything seems to have gone off very well. There were no letters in the papers about the dangers of boys being let loose in London, and all that ridiculous twaddle that appears from time to time; and it is to be presumed that Eton and Harrow boys are quite as fully imbued with ideas of self-respect as those at other schools. And with regard to the rest of the boys, apart from the elevens, the letter of the Rev. A. Birch in the 'Times' of August 6 puts the matter in the clearest way. He was an Eton master in the fifties and sixties, and says. 'I should like to express my strong feeling that we ought to go back to the old arrangements of the forties, and play the match out on the first days of the holidays. I think it is taken too much for granted by your correspondents that the majority of Eton boys care to look on at cricket at Lord's. In my boyhood lovers of cricket, if the fathers allowed, met in small numbers to watch Eton, Winchester, and Harrow play at Lord's, but the vast majority of us stayed away. In the fifties and sixties, my experience as a *boethetic* was that the Eton and Harrow match was mainly valued for its long leave, and I question if the majority of parents cared for the privilege. The larger number of boys were wet bobs, and certainly did not go to Lord's to watch the cricket; probably many did not visit the ground, and preferred long leave at home. In these present days of Winchester match, Henley, Bisley, all fixtures for summer half and very expensive, I believe

a large number of parents would view the alteration of the date with much equanimity. Certainly, in the sixties after the match was over *school work died.*' He thus corroborates the small boy's dictum, though in more euphonious terms.

This is the testimony of one who watched the matches under the old *régime*, who was a master under the new, and as such ought to carry great weight; and probably the present masters will admit that the school work after Lord's is not marked by any great assiduity or application. It is no doubt a fact, as Mr. Birch says, that when once the school breaks up the greater proportion are as keen as possible to go home to their friends and their own amusements, and very few, comparatively speaking, would care to waste much of their holidays in London and at Lord's. To sum up, it seems that matters have come to such a crisis that the question resolves itself into, 'Shall we have a *bonâ-fide* cricket match as of yore, or a London picnic?' Let all cricketers, and especially Etonians and Harrovians, who, after all, are the only interested parties, make a firm stand, and say, 'Cricket as it should be played;' and even if Winchester cannot be persuaded to meet its old rivals as of old in the threefold struggle, may August 1898 see the Light Blue and Dark Blue elevens, the representatives of 'Floreat Etona' and 'Stet Fortuna domûs,' meet as of old, and declare with one voice: 'The play's the thing,' and not the ring.





TIROS ON TYRES

BY MURIEL GATHORNE-HARDY

THERE are some people who do not approve of ladies riding bicycles. I imagine, however, that even these critics cannot deny that it is an extremely useful way of getting about. One thinks nothing of bicycling ten miles, but one thinks a great deal before walking that distance.

It is true that there are many troubles connected with a bicycle, what with puncturing tyres, the chain getting loose, the treadles coming off, &c. These things are distinctly annoying; but then everything has its drawbacks, and one cannot expect the bicycle to be exempt. I must say that personally I have had very little trouble with the tyres of my machine; but my father and sister have made up for it.

They both have very good bicycles, but there is a positive fate against their keeping any air in their back wheels. If they can't manage to puncture them they split them or they artfully contrive to let the valve slip off.

My father is particularly good at this. He starts for a ride with his bicycle in beautiful order. On his way back he suddenly finds that his back tyre is absolutely flat. He gets off and pumps for a good quarter of an hour, and his tyre is still flat. He does not say much, because he is a good patient man, but he thinks volumes. Then, instead of trying to find out what is the matter, he walks beside his bicycle and leads it home. This has happened several times, but it never appears to occur to him to see if the valve has slipped; no, this is beneath him; he prefers to suffer, and many is the time he has toiled home for many weary miles.

My sister is really very tiresome in the way she punctures her tyre. She doesn't do it in a nice straightforward fashion like any

COMES DOWN SITTING ON THE GROUND

other ordinary person. I suppose she thinks it would not be exciting enough. She generally punctures it with a thorn, not a nice polite thorn, that after it has made a sufficient hole in the tyre drops out, but a persistent thorn that remains in and only allows the air to ooze out by degrees. She has done this several times, and it causes a great deal of trouble. We have both learnt how to mend punctures, and consequently we set to work on her bicycle. This requires a good deal of preparation. We generally do it in the stable yard. We stand the bicycle upside down, and after getting the tyre off, we proceed to examine the inside tube. There is not the slightest sign of a hole, but we send for a bucket of water which one of the helpers brings, and we plunge the tube into it. First we think we see bubbles everywhere, but after a little we find there isn't such a thing as a bubble. This annoys us very much, for by this time we are a good deal splashed, and very hot and cross. We dry the tube and put it on, and then we get half the tyre on, but no power will induce the other half to fit. We tug and pull, but nothing happens. A happy thought strikes me. Why not send for the boot and knife boy? So we send for him. He comes, and he and the helper try to fit that tyre on for the best part of an hour. Another happy thought strikes me. The butler! If he can't do it, then we will send the bicycle to the nearest town. He comes, oh! useful man, and in less than five minutes the tyre is on, and the boot and knife boy is pumping his heart and soul into the machine. Alas! the tyre remains flat. We look at it for some minutes in silence. I suggest that it must be the valve that is wrong. We examine the valve and find it is absolutely right. A few minutes later my sister and I try to get out of the stable yard, naturally leaving the butler, the helper, and the boot and knife boy to battle with the machine.

The butler appears shortly in his shirt sleeves holding a small thorn in his hand. We all come out of the house to look at it, and make intelligent remarks, such as, 'I wonder how it got there?' when we can't think of anything more original.

When I teach anybody to ride I always tell them a few elementary things about the machine, but I won't go into that now, but only try to describe some of my experiences in giving lessons to beginners.

There are several kinds of beginners—the quick, the indifferent, and the hopeless. It is delightful to teach the first of these; they give very little trouble, though as a rule they are not free from conceit. They never forget to ask how long

you took to learn; you tell them rather reluctantly, and find you took longer than they did. This they profess not to believe; but they do, inwardly, because they go and tell their friends, and those friends tell you.

The indifferent beginners are perhaps the funniest. Some of them take hours getting on to the bicycle at all; others get on with an enormous spring which is calculated to upset themselves, the bicycle, and their teacher. Once in the saddle we proceed slowly, or we wobble slowly down the road.

'One thing I wish you to remember,' I always tell them, 'is to sit up, and not to lean on your handles.' 'Yes,' they say, with a tremendous lurch which drags me from one side of the road to the other. (Have you ever noticed that it is very difficult to say 'Yes' or anything else when learning to ride a bicycle? It takes your attention off.) We go a little faster, but we wobble fearfully. I look at the rider's hands; they are clenched over the handles in an agonised grip. 'You must not lean on your handles!' I say for the fiftieth time. 'Oh, no! I forgot. I think I'll get off,' my pupil says, as if this must inevitably be an awful disappointment to me. 'All right, get off,' I say; 'you must slacken a little, and then wait till——' But before I can get in another word, she gives an extraordinary kind of jump, ending with a flop, comes down sitting on the ground, and pulls the bicycle over with her. This is quite unnecessary, and I tell her so. I get on the machine and show her a few things, and hope she takes them in, which as a rule she does very slowly, if at all.

Then there are the ungrateful beginners. They make one very cross, for they are so abusive. I have only taught one ungrateful beginner, and she can't ride; never again will I undertake such a pupil. The names I was called were quite shocking. It was an extremely hot day when we first began, and as she did not think she was safe with only one person to hold her, I got somebody to help me, and we started. She took a considerable time getting on, but went along fairly well when we were once off; however, it didn't matter how well she went, she used always to imagine that the bicycle was going over. On these occasions she used to utter piercing yells, and shriek out, 'You perfect idiot! you're not holding me!' This was absolutely untrue; I was purple from holding her, and so was my companion on the other side. At her second lesson she was more abusive than ever. Again there were two people to hold her up, and she got on rather well. However, she still screamed when she thought something might be going to happen, and insisted that

'I CAN'T FIND MY OTHER TREADLE!'

we 'had let go of her;' she was 'absolutely certain that we were not holding her.' At last I could stand it no longer. Having been called a 'perfect idiot' and been told that I was 'doing no good' fourteen times every other minute, I thought I would leave her, and see how she would like being held up by one person. She speedily found out that I *had* been some good, for no sooner did I let go my hold than I heard several of the too familiar yells, and saw her lying on the grass, evidently trying to hide under the bicycle. She got up (not on to the bicycle—she has never ridden since—but she got up) from *under* the bicycle, and declared she was fearfully bruised. 'What on earth made it go over?' she wanted to know; it was 'a beastly machine,' and she would 'never get on the wretched thing again.' She never has done so, and still speaks of that 'appalling fall' she had, declaring that she was 'black and blue all over for weeks.' This you can believe or not, as you like.

Before I tell you about the hopeless riders, I must say a few words about a friend of mine whom I taught to ride. She was a lady who put out every bone in her body, or hurt herself in some way or another, whenever she possibly could; so I had to be very careful—with a friend who was so readily fractured. She learnt very quickly, but never in my life have I seen anybody so fond of going round in a circle. I taught her in a garden, and when she could go just a little I started her on the grass, so that she should not hurt herself if she fell. I sent her off straight, but it was no good! The minute I left her, round and round that bit of grass she always went, till why on earth she was not ill I cannot imagine. Another of her weaknesses was that she never remembered the difference between her brake and her bell; going down hill she used to ring her bell frantically, hoping, I suppose, to stop the bicycle.

The hopeless riders are sorely trying to temper and patience, indeed, teaching them quite shortens one's life. The hopeless rider is a long time getting on; she is fussy, and takes ages getting 'settled,' as she calls it. I don't tell her that it is not worth while her getting settled, as she will so soon be *un*settled, because it would be rude; but I think it. We start somehow, and immediately she calls out 'I can't find my other treadle!' That is the cry of the hopeless rider. 'You will never find it,' I manage to gasp out, for the weight is nearly intolerable, 'if you persist in pawing the air in that extraordinary manner—and don't clutch the handles!'

We wobble on, she leaning her entire weight on me. 'Have

you got the treadle?' I ask, and on finding she has, we proceed for a few seconds. Then comes another and almost incurable trick of the hopeless rider. Whether it is that she is so happy at having found the treadles I don't know, but she stands on them, waving her body in the air in the most marvellous manner imaginable. 'The bicycle has a seat,' I remark dryly; 'you can sit down.' But no, she continues to rise up and down, and on these occasions I get a friend to help me hold up the machine. At last she gets off, hopping on one leg, and pulling the bicycle with her, the most ungraceful performance in the world. We start again, and this time she never does find either treadle. A hopeless rider is always under the impression that her treadles are somewhere on the front wheel, and as long as she keeps that idea she had better not try to ride a bicycle.

These are just a few specimens of the many people I have taught to ride. Of course it is very nice to see them riding all over the place, thinking nothing of blowing their noses when jammed in between two 'busses, and to know that it is *you* who have enabled them to ride. But is it worth all the heat and worry? I am really doubtful. Taking it all round, you don't get much credit. Your ex-pupils come up to you afterwards, in fact they sail up to you, on a beautiful new bicycle, and wave to you—people always wave on a bicycle, it looks so well. They laugh and talk with you a little, and then ask if you remember the time when they couldn't go alone!

Do I remember the time? Am I ever likely to forget it!

SHOOTING PARTRIDGES UNDER A KITE

BY J. A. MILNE

WHETHER 'driving' or 'walking up' partridges is the more preferable method is a point which will doubtless continue to be argued so long as both methods are in vogue. There will, however, always remain a sufficiency of men who are quite content, or for some reason or other perhaps obliged, to walk their birds in the good old-fashioned way over quite a small piece of land where doubtless driving is out of the question. This kind of sportsman probably derives as much enjoyment from his hard-earned bag of four or five brace (and often fewer) as his more ambitious brother gun from his twenty or thirty brace of driven birds.

But there are times when the wildness and cunning of the 'little brown bird' are enough to try the patience of the proverbial saint. Of all things, I know nothing much more tantalising than to tramp over fields galore and see covey after covey rise well out of gunshot, or drop over into neighbouring land which does not belong to one (a fact of which they always seem well aware), and by every other artful and cunning device bring home to one the hard truth of the old adage, 'So near and yet so far.' An empty bag, a bad temper, and a sense of chagrin at being 'bested' by a few exasperating little bipeds, is about the total outcome of such an expedition. I am often inclined to think that the partridge is imbibing the present-day tendency to higher education.

Under these and similar circumstances it becomes more or less a necessity to find some means of circumvention if one is desirous of obtaining some modest sport, and of seeing this particularly palatable variety of game on one's dinner table. To drive is the

first thing that suggests itself, but the country may be such as to render this almost useless, as I found to my cost last season, or the facilities for carrying it out may be in some other respect lacking. If this be so the 'hawk kite' may be called into requisition, with, as I hope to show, in all probability considerable success. That many sportsmen scoff at the use of a 'kite' I know, but *experientia docet*, and doubtless, if some of the sceptics would make practical trial for themselves, they might have occasion to alter their opinion.

The birds of last season will be remembered, at any rate in certain districts, as having been about as wild as it was possible for them to be. Whether it was the early harvest, or the prolonged wet weather, or from whatever other cause it may have been brought about, the fact remained, and the puzzle was how to get a shot. I was shooting with a friend, a veteran sportsman, and after the first week or two in September it became a matter of discussion as to how we were to increase the bags. My friend had never used a kite before and naturally hesitated before trying it, but, as things could not well be much worse, it was decided to make the experiment.

We were lucky enough to be favoured with just the right amount of wind, and, as a beginning, walked a small strip of land separated from the rest and on which our largest bag hitherto had been about a solitary brace. The very first day we used the kite we increased this to six brace, which was almost at once sufficient proof of its utility. Had there been any doubt about the matter it was soon dispelled by the results of succeeding days, until, in fact, we came to look upon our 'inanimate bird' as quite indispensable.

The method and theory of flying a kite for shooting purposes are, no doubt, pretty generally known, but it may be as well to mention a few of the particulars.

Taking it for granted that there is neither too much nor too little wind, but just a steady breeze, the kite-flyer must so contrive that his 'hawk' floats in the air about fifty to eighty yards in front of the line of guns, and must manipulate it so as to maintain this distance as they advance. This is naturally more satisfactorily accomplished when walking down wind than the reverse; for in the former case the flyer can walk with the guns, whereas in the latter he must of necessity be in front and partly in the line of fire. With a little practice, however, a man can soon become expert and know exactly where to go and what to do.

The partridges, seeing their dreaded enemy the hawk hovering

over them, either lie where they are, too terrified to move, or else run like mad things to the nearest cover, for choice a hedgerow, if one is handy. The latter is their more favourite plan, and I will endeavour to describe a typical instance.

The first day we used the kite we started, numbering four guns, to walk a long and somewhat narrow stubble field with a fine thick hedgerow, flanked on one side by a ditch, at the far end. The wind was with us, and our kite was beautifully poised in front of us. When about half-way up a covey rose about 150 yards in front and made straight for the hedge, flying low; immediately afterwards another, which had apparently settled close to the hedge, ran as if for their lives to the same haven. When the kite was allowed to move forward, so as to be flying straight above the hedge, it was kept there stationary to strike awe into the victims beneath. The guns were divided, two on either side, and a dog put in to run the hedgerow. Then the sport began. The birds, what with the dog below and the hawk above, were at their wits' end, and got out of the hedge and ditch in single shots, or in twos and threes, and right sporting shots did they give. Cork-screwing in an almost snipe-like manner, and flying as if ten thousand demons were after them, it was practically impossible to get a second barrel in effectively. Better or more exciting sport while it lasted one could not have wished for, and this is only one instance of many.

At other times the birds would lie in the stubbles or roots like stones, until the guns were within easy shot, but these, egged on by fright, travelled at a terrific pace. I remember on one occasion we almost walked over two large coveys, so close were they lying; in fact, they rose at our very feet, and, as we were walking up wind and they came straight at us, I actually felt their wings flap in my face. In this case the only way in which we could get a shot was by turning right round and firing as they went from us. To say we were taken by surprise would be to put it mildly. These instances will serve to show that some excellent and varied sport may be obtained by this simple and effective means.

As regards the objections to it, I know many are urged, but in the main I have found that they are erroneous. For instance, some say it tends to drive birds off the ground altogether, and so spoil the shooting. I cannot say that this has been my experience. Partridges are always more or less on the move and there may be more on one's land some days than others, but even at the end of the season, after shooting constantly under a kite, I found no more dearth of birds than ordinary. Again, I have heard it said that birds

soon become accustomed to the deception, and then become wilder than ever. This may be so to a certain extent, but as a general rule it does not hold good. As a proof, it is a noteworthy fact that, last season, if I walked without the kite I probably never got a shot, whereas, with its assistance, I never came home without a few brace of birds. This, to my mind, speaks for itself. That the method possesses some minor disadvantages is possible, but they are not of much account.

It is a great point to have a capable and intelligent man to do the flying, and one who does not always want to be told his business. We were fortunate enough to secure a man of this description, and he was as keen as the most enthusiastic sportsman could wish. He loved his 'hawk,' and it was most amusing to see the affectionate way he handled it; as he himself put it, 'She's the sort o' bird I likes; she never *hungers*, and she's never *dry*!' And he was not far wrong, for it is in its very simplicity that its usefulness lies. It is one thing to find an army of beaters and have your birds driven, and quite another to find one man merely to fly a kite for you.

Dart's kites, made of brown silk, in excellent imitation of a hawk, are very portable, nicely balanced, and fly well.

Personally, I have formed a high opinion of the merits of this means to an end, and I only hope I shall be privileged to enjoy many more days such as I had last season. To hear the familiar 'Mark over!' to see a covey bolting to a hedgerow, and to follow it out in the manner described above, requires to be done to be appreciated.

If, on the strength of my remarks, compiled from actual experience, a few unbelievers will so far give way as to try a day under the kite for themselves, I shall feel that my poor pen has to some extent accomplished its modest object. That they will not regret it I feel assured.

IN THE SCENT OF THE SAWDUST: A RECORD DAY

BY G. CHRISTOPHER DAVIES

It is the fashion nowadays to give fantastic titles, and I flatter myself that the above is an especially good one, because you will wonder what on earth sawdust has to do with pike-fishing. Yet the pleasant odour of a carpenter's shop, the sawdust accompanying any wood-working or tree-felling, is always grateful to my nostrils. Never do I perceive it, either, without thinking of a capital day's pike-fishing I once enjoyed—one only of several at the same place, it is true; all equally successful, but this one perhaps more enjoyable because my son, then a boy of fourteen, enjoyed it with me. And where is the father who is not proud to watch the first participations of his son in outdoor sports? The swimming lessons, the first successful shot at a rabbit, the growing love for boats, and the instinctive skill in steering a yacht at sea—all these are a rejuvenescence of the father as he watches them in his son, and a palliative for the approach of middle age. Talking of sons, by the way, there is one characteristic of the rising generation which strikes me as very different to the days of my own boyhood, and that is the *blasé* way in which boys of the present day accept pleasures which would have made boys of my day go wild with excitement. The fact is that from babyhood children of the better-off classes are led to expect gifts and favours and pleasures from

too-indulgent parents and friends on birthdays and feast-days, and at odd times innumerable.

I remember that I used to make my own rods out of hazel twigs, hung for a year to season in a dry place, with weights to keep them straight; I used to pick horsehair off the stallions' tails to make my lines with. I have even fished with a crooked pin, and caught gudgeon and ruffs therewith; I made my own flies and dug my own worms. Now all these things, even the worms, are bought for the boy of to-day. I remember the glee with which, after a few moments of awful excitement, I landed pike of a pound or two in weight; while my son looks with contempt on a five-pounder!

These thoughts passed through my mind as I stood by the sawmill, between the wood and the water, while my driver groped about with a lantern, putting his pony up in a rough shed close by the waterfall which drove the great black wheel. Overhead the stars twinkled frostily, but a light wind moaned through the naked branches, and gave us hope that the frost would not lay the water. Pervading everything was the scent of the sawdust and the newly sawn pile of boards; and, save the noise of the falling water, there was no sound but the rustle of a rabbit in the dead bracken and the occasional cries of wildfowl on the lake.

We hung our two bait-cans—in which were three score of lively roach—in the stream, and followed our guide through the wood, stumbling over unseen obstacles and frightening noisy wood pigeons from the firs, to his cottage, where we were to pass the night. To save a long morning drive, and a consequent late start, we had arranged to spend the night at a woodman's cottage, and as it was a large one of its kind, and scrupulously clean and sufficiently furnished, we were quite comfortable.

By the light of a blazing wood-fire we listened to the country wisdom of the woodman and his good wife. He lamented the absence of the gentry from their ancestral homes, which is so common in Norfolk, and stated that although the shooting tenants or rich manufacturers who hired the halls and parks and wide-stretching game preserves were good and generous in their way, yet they were 'foreigners,' and could not understand Norfolk ways. He preferred the old owner of the soil; but it was clearly more a matter of sentiment with him than anything else. In his opinion, one great cause of the present agricultural depression was the greediness of the farmers and the abolition of the stringent leases which landlords were formerly able to compel tenants to carry out. Now farmers get all they can out of the soil, and put

NO! THERE IS A DUCK SWIMMING ON IT

little in; they do not employ sufficient labour to till the land properly, and successive occupations of this kind have spoilt many a good farm, for which it is now difficult to get a tenant at any rent whatever. I give his opinion, but I do not add my own, knowing how dangerous it is for a simple lawyer to advise a farmer. One thing he said which I know to be true: the labourer likes the landlord better than he likes the farmer.

It is early to bed; the wind blows cold this February night, and our fears point to frost. After a disturbed night in a bed which, barring that it was too short for one and too narrow for two, was comfortable, we rose at dawn and gazed over the broad lake, which lay glassy still in the grey misty air. It is frozen! No! there is a duck swimming on it; and we are thankful, to be sure that there is no ice.

A good and leisurely breakfast—I do hate hurrying over breakfast—and a cigarette in the garden, and we stroll to the mill, where the mossy wheel is already turning, and the bright circular saws ripping through the white wood and letting loose its fragrant odour. The punt is ready for us—a long, flat-bottomed thing with a capacious well, where we may store our fish alive. It is understood that all fish under 5 lb. in weight are to be returned to the water; but if sport be as good as we expect it to be, we shall turn back many exceeding that weight. Although I have never had a blank day on this water, others have not been so fortunate; and, as it so happened, the only other person who had leave that season had an absolutely blank day. I well remember, too, fishing here with two companions, when, without moving from the one spot which shall presently be described, we caught altogether some forty pike between two of us; the third got scarcely a fish. It was pure ill-luck on his part, for his skill in fishing was in no way inferior to ours. Yet while our two floats were constantly diving under water, his, within a yard or two, had no run. He was rather a peppery fellow, and his protestations against his bad luck kept us well amused. By the end of the day he had subsided into sullen and hopeless indifference.

But the water is smooth as glass and clear as gin—crystal, I mean. We emerge into the lake out of a narrow and weedy canal, and wildfowl and coots fly hurriedly away with great noise and spluttering tracks across the water, which must startle many pike. The water is not more than a foot to eighteen inches deep, except in the one spot where the fish do congregate, where it is about three feet deep. This shallow depression, near the sluice end

of the great lake, will, we know, be full of pike and great perch. If by chance we drift across it, we should see the pike dart away, three or four at a time, with muddy swirls, and there would be no sport for us. We must gently paddle to, say, thirty yards off it, or as far as we can manage to throw, place our mooring-posts in and prepare our rods and tackle as silently as may be. See! a swirl close by the boat shows that we have frightened one good fish. Another swirl further off shows where one is feeding.

'Now, old chap, get your line all in clear coils, and we will both cast at the same time. One, two, three—and away!' The live baits splash on the water, the floats steady for a moment, then both disappear.

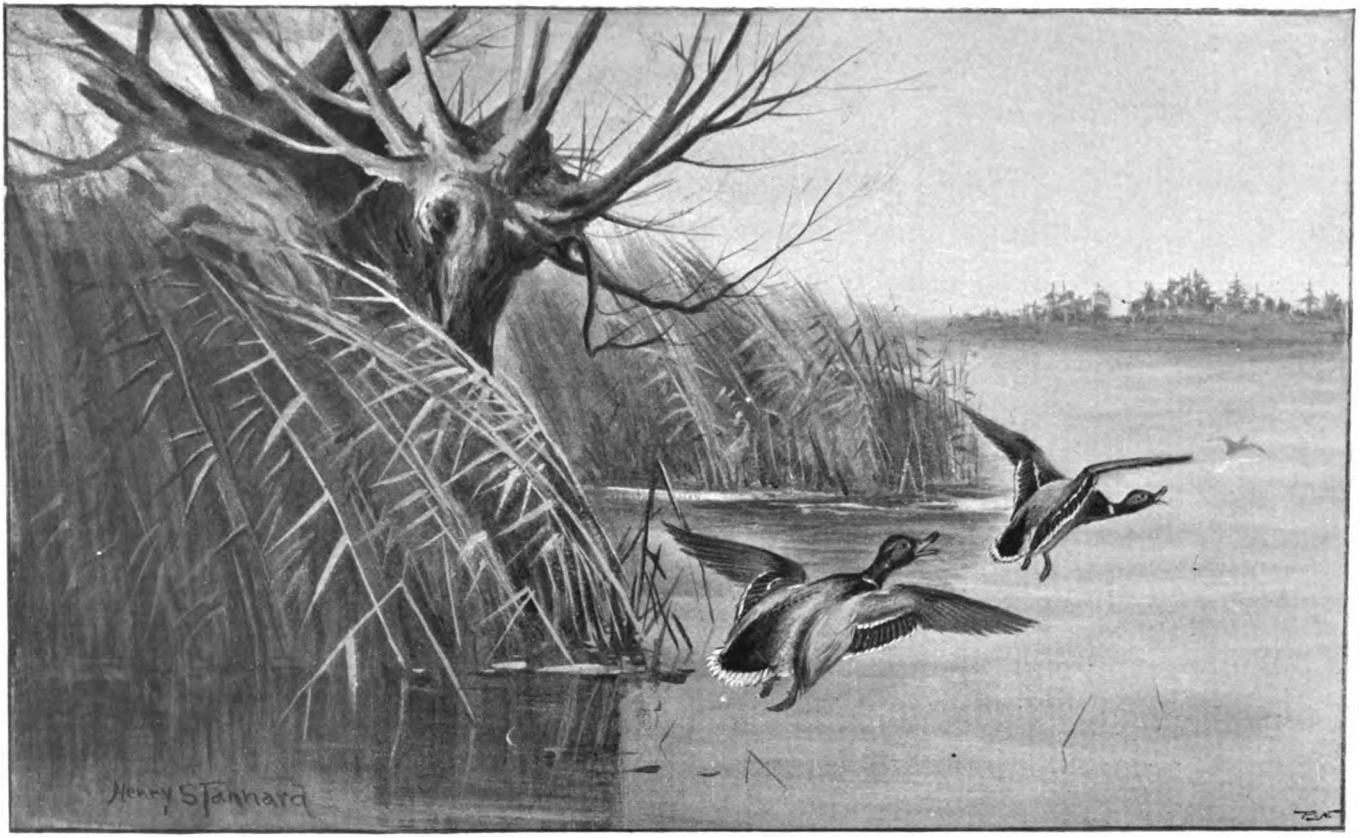
'Father, I've got a run!' exclaimed the youngster excitedly.

'So have I: try and keep your fish your end of the boat, and I will keep mine this end. When we see what size they are, the one with the smaller fish shall gaff the larger one for the other.'

As my fish was a five-pounder, and to be returned, while my son's was a ten-pounder, I let mine run while I gaffed his. Knowing there were plenty of fish, and on the feed, we took liberties in the gaffing, and waited until we could gently hook the gaff in the lower jaw, so that the fish should sustain no appreciable injury. Also, we made up our minds that anything under ten pounds should be kept alive in the well until the close of the day.

There is no difficulty about striking the fish here. Although there might be thirty, and after a while forty yards of line out, when the fish took the bait they did so with a vehement rush, which tightened the line and made the strike easy. There were also no weeds for the bagging line to get foul of. Occasionally, of course, a pike would come towards the boat with the bait, and then the line had to be gathered in as rapidly as possible by hand, and the pike, feeling the gradual check, would leave the bait.

As to striking, I find the surest method, after getting in the slack of the line, is to give a sharp draw with a wriggle or series of jerks at the end of it, rather than a quick hard strike. Mr. Pennell says, 'Strike, and strike hard;' but after breaking many lines and traces, and tearing away many hooks, I came to the conclusion that 'hard' is a comparative term, and that I struck too hard, just as at tennis, however gently I try to hit the ball, it flies far out of the court. Now, with my draw and wriggle I rarely miss a fish, if they are sizeable ones and on the feed. Of course, if they do as the educated jack in my own fishery do, swim gently up, count the hooks, and then seize the bait by the tail, no sort of striking can hook them.



WILDFOWL AND COOTS FLY HURRIEDLY AWAY

THE RUNS WERE FAST AND FURIOUS

'I am under again, father!'

'That's right; and from the way my float is careering over the water, there is a pike after mine too. There; down it goes!'

Well, the runs were fast and furious all the morning, and by lunch-time, when there was a lull for some time, there were five pike, from ten to fifteen pounds, dead in the boat, and fifteen from eight to five alive in the well, to say nothing of many smaller ones put back at once.

We were glad to rest and take a leisurely lunch while the ripples raised by a light westerly wind which had sprung up tapped musically against the flat-ended punt. The forenoon had been sunny and bright, but in the afternoon a chill drizzle came up, veiling the trim woods and the herds of deer in the park, and the fish left off feeding. After a long interval, thinking it possible that we had caught all that were resting in the depression, we allowed the punt to drift over it; but although the ripples prevented very clear vision, we saw scores of pike lying side by side, in groups of three and four, and they scurried away at our approach, so that presently there was not one left. Having effectually spoiled this fishing-place, we took to spinning along the edges of some contiguous reed beds, returning after about an hour to the deep water. In this way we added nine other fish to the bag ere the wet dark afternoon drew to a close, and with somewhat weary backs we pulled slowly to the landing-place, where the keeper awaited us.

The live pike made a fine kicking about on the greensward while they were being weighed and returned to the water.

A person who fished this lake a week or two later did a very unsportsmanlike thing. He caught as many fish, and kept them all, including a lot of three-pounders. His largest one was 22 lb. in weight. The following year my visit to the sawdust pool was rather late in the season, when the pike were sluggish. A three days' high wind had made the water thick with mud, and the gale rendered it so difficult to fish, that at last after a blank morning I decided to give it up, and, letting the boat drive homeward, I allowed my line to drag behind. All at once it was seized on the top of the water by a heavy fish, and in a moment I had to get in the oars, drop the anchor, take up the furiously bending rod, and begin to play the fish, while the boat danced on the swell and made footing difficult. I was quite alone, and when I drew the fish within sight, it seemed to me that here was my stuffing fish at last (I have made up my mind not to stuff any pike under 30 lb.); but when I hauled it into the boat with the gaff I found it was but a little over 24 lb.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE GAME OF CROQUET

BY LEONARD WILLIAMS

THE present is a critical time in the fortunes of the game of croquet. After suffering almost total annihilation for nearly twenty years, it is showing unmistakable signs of a strong and vigorous recrudescence. The last three years have seen well-attended meetings at Maidstone, Bristol, Bath, Budleigh Salterton, and even Wimbledon. An All-England Croquet Association has been formed with a strong committee and Mr. Walter Peel for its secretary This Association has held meetings under its auspices, and has, as a result of several sittings of a specially appointed committee, issued a revised and authoritative edition of the laws of the game. There is just now, in fact, a boom in croquet. The appearance of anything in the nature of a text-book at such a time cannot fail to be a matter of the gravest moment. If the book is good—as good, say, as Mr. Hutchinson's 'Golf' in the Badminton Series—it would give the game such an impetus as would clear it, effectually and for ever, of the Slough of Despond from which it is just emerging. Should the book, however, fail to come up to the required standard—if it should be weak, inconsequent, verbose—it would certainly do a disservice to the game which might prove irreparable.

It was therefore with very mixed feelings that I examined 'Croquet: its History, Laws, and Secrets,' by Arthur Lillie (Longmans, 1897). The author is a gentleman who has been familiar with the subject since before the period of croquet's first

popularity, and one who has rendered a good account of himself with the mallet at many a doughty tournament, even as recently as last year. He has evidently placed himself in touch with those interested in the game both past and present, and has engaged in quite a laudable amount of research in matters pertaining thereto. The book, which is the only treatise on the game now extant, is well printed and moderately illustrated, and is by no means devoid of interest to such as may be already interested. It has no index of any sort.

The first chapter is somewhat alarming. We are introduced, even at page 1, to pathology, anatomy (of a curious sort), and therapeutics. As we proceed we are regaled with quotations from Captain Mayne Reid and Lord Beaconsfield, with annotations by the author, which contain some references to croquet and much of the philosophy of life. The chapter closes with the publication of two letters to the 'Darlington and Stockton Times,' which, after the 'Headless Horseman' and 'Lothair,' is dangerously near bathos. These letters are, moreover, entirely *à propos de bottes*.

The second chapter is devoted to some researches into a game called 'Pall Mall,' of which I have heard before; and although it is the best illustrated portion of the book, it has but a languid interest for croquet people. From this point, for more than one hundred weary pages, one looks in vain for anything directly bearing upon croquet as it is now played. A sketch of the evolution of the modern game is there, no doubt. It is, however, so hopelessly entangled in more or less irrelevant matter as to be very difficult of extrication. There are reports of old meetings held thirty years ago, resuscitated from musty local journals, in which Mr. Arthur Lillie's name appears with remarkable frequency. These old reports are not without a melancholy interest to some of us. To the majority, however, they must surely be dull in the extreme, and it is probable that not one reader in twenty will have the courage to wade through them.

If Mr. Lillie had spared us these first one hundred and twenty-five pages, and had devoted the time and trouble which they undoubtedly represent to a fuller explanation of the game, its implements, tactics, and rules, he might have produced a book worthy of his knowledge, his industry, and his attention to detail; for the succeeding five chapters, pp. 125–213, contain the germs of much that is good and useful, and some portions indeed are entirely admirable. For Chapter XIV., entitled 'The Use of the Mallet,' we have nothing but praise; and that on the tactics,

which immediately follows, is so good as to make one regret that it is not better.

What should have been a very lucid description of a four-ball break by yellow, beginning at the second hoop, presented with the aid of well-drawn diagrams, is horribly marred by the fact that on these diagrams there is nothing to show where the game starts, nor is there any indication whatever as to which ball is which. It surely would have been a simple thing to have indicated the first hoop, to have put letters or figures on the balls, and an explanatory footnote on each diagram. As matters now are, we have little hesitation in saying that no one but an experienced player could possibly understand these tactics; and as even he will only do so with some difficulty, it is probable that the novice will prefer an exercise in the differential calculus. And the pity of it all is, that Mr. Lillie's tactics are excellent, and deserve to be carefully studied and thoroughly understood by all who wish to play the game properly.

Much is said, in the course of the book, on the subject of the rules, albeit in a sadly disconnected manner, the references to this important subject being scattered in distracting confusion throughout the various chapters. We are therefore grateful to the author for at least one emphatic opinion, which emerges at page 249.

'It seems to me that Wimbledon croquet on a full-sized ground is an excellent game, and that its laws should not be disturbed by any change for many, many years.'

Now, all players are ready to subscribe to the opinion that 'Wimbledon' croquet (in contradistinction to the tea-party variety) on a full-sized ground is an excellent game; but most of them are emphatically of opinion that it is capable of very decided improvement.

The weak point in the game is the great difficulty of re-entry. The player who is 'out' has at present but two chances of getting 'in.' One is a blunder by his opponent, and the other is a long shot. Now, long shots into the opponent game are admittedly bad tactics; and the prospects of a blunder by an opponent who combines skill and care are not very bright. It thus not infrequently occurs that a game between two good players degenerates into a *pas seul* for the one who first gets in. It is not a game at all; it is a procession.

To remedy this very glaring defect, which mars an otherwise excellent game, various expedients have been suggested.

Mr. Peel would give 'extras,' and create time limits for the

possessor of the balls. The late Mr. Walsh proposed equal bisques. Others have advocated a circular baulk in the centre of the ground; in fact, ingenuity has been exhausted in well-intentioned endeavours to overcome this difficulty. Most of these expedients have this in common--that they seek to introduce a new element into the game and alter its essential characteristics. Any endeavour of this nature seems to be surely foredoomed to failure. The essentials of the game are as good as they can be, and I am convinced that the only method likely to prove successful is the legitimate and logical one of strengthening the existing rules so as to insure greater accuracy in execution. Some people seem to be oppressed with a fear that if this policy is adopted the result will be to alarm novices, and cause a diminution in the number of players. The position of matters appears to me in exactly the opposite light.

A really good outdoor game, demanding a high degree of skill for its successful performance, in which the interests of both sides are adequately maintained, will always command a *clientèle* in this country. The greater the degree of the necessary skill, and the better the provision for the maintenance of interest, the more popular will the game be; and, contrariwise, if the standard of skill be low, and either side be condemned to long periods of enforced inactivity, the fewer will be the votaries.

Croquet, at the present moment, is unquestionably in the second of these categories; and if its present popularity is to hold, it must as speedily as possible be raised to a higher position. To do this, the standard of skill must be raised; and when this is done, the other, the crucial defect, will vanish automatically. For with strengthened laws will come more frequent breakdowns to the player who is 'in,' and as a consequence more frequent chances of re-entry to the player who is 'out.' Mr. Lillie and his friends would have us believe that croquet is encouraged and kept alive by the desultory player at the garden party and the juvenile party on suburban grass-plots, and that the strengthening of the laws would so alarm these that our recruiting grounds would disappear. So far from sharing this opinion, careful observation entirely convinces me that this form of croquet is as sublimely unconscious of, as it is contemptuously indifferent to, all Wimbledon rules, maxims, and recommendations, and that it will continue to exist in spite and in defiance of them as long as there are back gardens in Peckham and grass-plots in country villas. The game, thus played, has no more relation to Wimbledon croquet than has kitchen-whist to the game as played

at 'The Portland.' If croquet is to flourish, it must be improved on its merits as a game of skill and along the lines of its legitimate evolution. The bogey of the garden party and the suburban grass-plot must be exorcised. There must be no further worship of Belial and Moloch; and the authorities must understand that, to expect to develop a fine game by encouraging the growth of a bastard bumble-puppy is the very *ne plus ultra* of unscientific folly.

Unfortunately, signs are not wanting that this suicidal policy is likely to prevail. The most notable alteration made last year by the revising committee was in the rule prescribing the procedure in the event of a player using the wrong ball or playing out of turn. The old rule enacted that, 'if a player play out of turn or with the wrong ball, the remainder of the turn is lost, and any point or roquet after the mistake.' This was clearly a wise rule. Accuracy, in thought as well as in deed, is the essence of croquet; and if a player is so thoughtless as to play with the wrong ball, he should suffer an adequate penalty – a penalty, that is, which gives his opponent an advantage. This rule is now abolished, and in its place we are given one the practical effect of which is to remove all punishment for this unpardonable carelessness. The reason for the alteration is difficult to discover, unless it be that some players possessed of more influence than skill have suffered through the stringency of the old rule. As well abolish the penalty for the revoke in whist for the reason that Jeames and Susan find a difficulty in following suit!

Here, then, we have a retrograde movement, placing a premium upon inaccuracy, and reducing still further the chances of re-entry —a concession to Belial and Moloch which awakens anxious thoughts. If croquet is to survive, there must be an end to this kind of thing. The game must be developed along the lines of its legitimate evolution as a trial of skill. It must be nourished by strong, orderly, and definite laws, directed mainly to the encouragement of accuracy in thought and execution and to the punishment of incompetence and ineptitude. Much can be done in this direction at present; much, no doubt, must be left to time and experience.

Let us discuss briefly what may be done at once, leaving the future to the care of the principles we have endeavoured to enunciate.

The existing rule about playing with the wrong ball must be abolished and the old rule restored. This is by no means an individual, academic opinion. The experience of the last

Wimbledon meeting fully justifies the proposed restitution, which was loudly advocated by a large number of players, while no single voice was heard in defence of the recent legislation.

An extension of the boundary law to roquet strokes has several advocates, and many games are played on private lawns where no ball (except in hand) is permitted to pass the boundary without penalty. The proposed extension has, however, one grave disadvantage. It is that it is almost impossible to roquet a boundary ball at a distance of, say, thirty yards without causing it to pass the crease. And, unfortunately, the truer the direction of the shot, the more likely is this accident to happen. To demand the necessary accuracy in strength as well as direction is to demand the impossible on most lawns as at present laid and kept.

There is, however, another way in which the present boundary law can be strengthened, which may be commended to the serious attention of those interested in the welfare of the game. Under the present rule, if, in taking croquet, either ball is sent off the ground, the striker loses the remainder of his turn. This is not a sufficient penalty. The player in executing what is known as the counter-finesse—that is, in sending his own spent ball to join the adversary's spent ball on the boundary—frequently, if not generally, sends his spent ball across the line. He cannot, it is true, continue his turn ; but he has discounted this fact, and practically he goes unpunished for what is generally a clumsy, forcing shot. To meet this difficulty it should be enacted that, in taking croquet, to send either ball across a boundary is a foul stroke. The result of this would be to allow the adversary to recall the balls or leave them as they are, as it suits him best. This would not necessarily abolish the counter-finesse, but it would necessitate the manœuvre being executed with due skill and accuracy. Above all, it would materially improve the chances of re-entry.

If the indiarubber end to the mallet is to continue to exist—and there is much to be said in its favour—it should be made a foul stroke to hit the hoop with any portion of the mallet in the act of causing a ball to pass through that hoop. The reason of this is that some players habitually make their hoops with the guttapercha end, and the peculiar properties of this material enable the player to employ what is unquestionably a foul stroke, to 'scuttle' the ball through. The noiselessness of the rubber renders detection well-nigh impossible, an objection therefore futile. This stroke, which I saw successfully accomplished upon

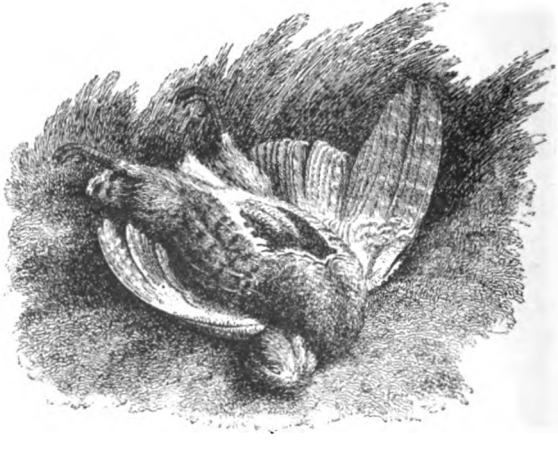
at least two occasions at the last Wimbledon meeting, is more easily performed than described. The proposed rule would insure its disappearance, for it cannot usually be managed without hitting the hoop with the stem of the mallet.

It is necessary to warn the reader of Mr. Lillie's book of an inaccuracy in the wording of the All-England Croquet Laws, 1897, as there printed. On page 144, under the list of foul strokes, appears :

'To touch, stop, or divert the course of a ball when in play and rolling, whether this be done by the striker or his partner.' This is the old rule. The existing one omits all mention of 'when in play and rolling,' and reads as follows :

'To touch, stop, or divert a ball, whether this be done by the striker or his partner.'

This may seem a small matter, but it really is not so; and I feel sure that, in the light of a recent experience, Mr. Lillie will be the first to recognise its importance. The new rule certainly seems to be wanting in definiteness. The old one was quite clear and quite fair. It should be reinstated.



A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

BY ANTHONY C. DEANE

'By the way, Phyllis,' I remarked, just as I was starting for the links, 'I dare say I shall be bringing a man to dinner to-night.'

I spoke in as careless a tone as possible, and with my hand on the door. But Phyllis was too quick for me.

'A man!' she cried. 'Oh, not another golfer?'

I had to admit that it might be a golfer.

'How perfectly odious! You will talk about the miserable game all the evening, and I shall be bored to death, as usual. How you can want—but as long as it isn't that Mr. Brown, I don't mind so much.'

This was awkward, for it was 'that Mr. Brown,' and I had to say so.

'George!' cried Phyllis, with a world of reproach in her voice, 'it's impossible! How can you dream of asking that creature here again? He hasn't got two ideas in his head beyond his wretched golf-sticks.'

'Clubs,' I amended plaintively.

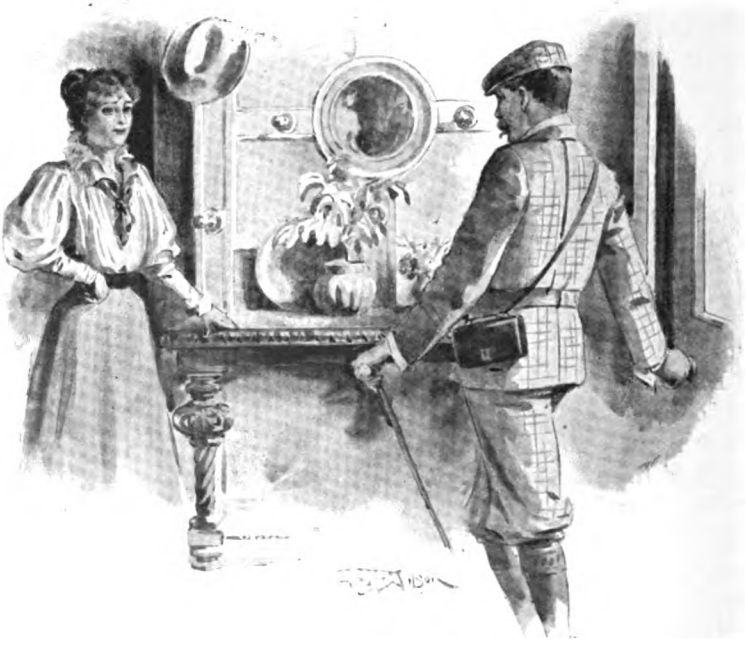
'And you brought him to dinner twice last week! He began talking golf the moment he came, and went on steadily for three hours. Goodness knows, I did my best to get him off the subject; but when I told him I didn't take the least interest in it, he merely turned his back on me and talked to you. George, you simply musn't ask him here again!'

'Very well,' said I, submissively. 'But about to-night? I'm afraid it's too late——'

'Too late! What do you mean?'

'Well,' I admitted guiltily, 'the fact is that I—er—asked him last night to come and dine after our round to-day. I didn't know you'd mind.'

Phyllis stamped her foot. 'It's too bad of you!' she cried. 'You must have known how insufferably he bores me! And now he's coming again; and he'll talk about nothing but his bunkers and his putters and his mashing-irons——'



'Oh, not another Golfer?'

'I don't *think* he'll talk about his "mashing-irons,"' I ventured to remark. 'What a pity it is, Phyllis, that you won't let me teach you the game, or at least show you how it is played! Then you could take an intelligent interest in our conversation, and——'

'An intelligent interest!' exclaimed Phyllis, with pitiless scorn. 'An intelligent interest in a stupid, tiresome game that's only fit for elderly cripples and children! I wish—yes, I wish with all my heart—that golf had never been invented!'

When Phyllis is in this mood, there is only one thing to be

done, and that, I need scarcely explain, is to beat a hasty retreat. So I fled out of the house towards the links, not pleased with myself, annoyed with Phyllis, and quite unreasonably angry with poor old Brown.

And yet Brown is undoubtedly something of a bore to those who do not share the one absorbing passion of his life. Most golfers go more or less mad when they first take up the game, but most also revert to comparative sanity after they have played for a year or so. But Brown has never done this; he has not even a lucid interval now and then. Phyllis was quite justified in her accusation; he thinks of and talks about nothing in the world but his favourite pastime, which he plays in all weathers from morning to night.

His indefatigable practice, however, has not by any means rendered him perfect as a player, and I was several holes up on him by the end of our round. This was so far satisfactory in itself, but it had the result of making him more voluble than ever. When he has won, Brown will sometimes relapse for a while into ecstatic silence. But after defeat he feels bound to explain how it was that disaster overtook him, and how the unparalleled excellence of his play came to be overbalanced by the whims of capricious fortune. He began his tale as we walked back together, and had only brought his narrative as far as his inexplicable bad fortune at the third hole when we reached the house. I thought of Phyllis, and trembled.

So, while Brown was washing his hands in my dressing-room, I sought out Phyllis and tried to prepare her for what I felt to be in store for her. To my surprise she remarked:

'Oh, I sha'n't mind at all—now. I should enjoy a conversation about golf above all things.'

I stared. 'Well, of all the inconsistent—why, only this morning you were abusing the game and calling me names for bringing Brown here!'

'Was I?' said Phyllis innocently, surveying herself in the looking-glass. 'No, I'm quite glad you've brought Mr. Brown to dinner. I've got a little surprise for you.'

At this moment a tremendous crash in the dressing-room made me run hastily in that direction.

Here I found Brown in his shirt-sleeves, red and apologetic, and surrounded by broken glass. He had picked up a club of mine which was standing in the corner, and had attempted to practise a full swing with it. Hence the fragments of gas-globe scattered about the floor.

Then we went down to dinner, and before we had finished our soup Brown was fairly under way.

'Now about that fourth hole,' he began. 'Did you ever see more extraordinary bad luck than I had to-day? My tee-shot was almost perfect, a good straight drive of 180 yards——'

'120,' I suggested.

'My dear fellow, I think I *ought* to know the distances on these links by this time! 180 yards, if it was an inch. But my second most unaccountably——'

'Did *not* go 180 yards,' I hinted.

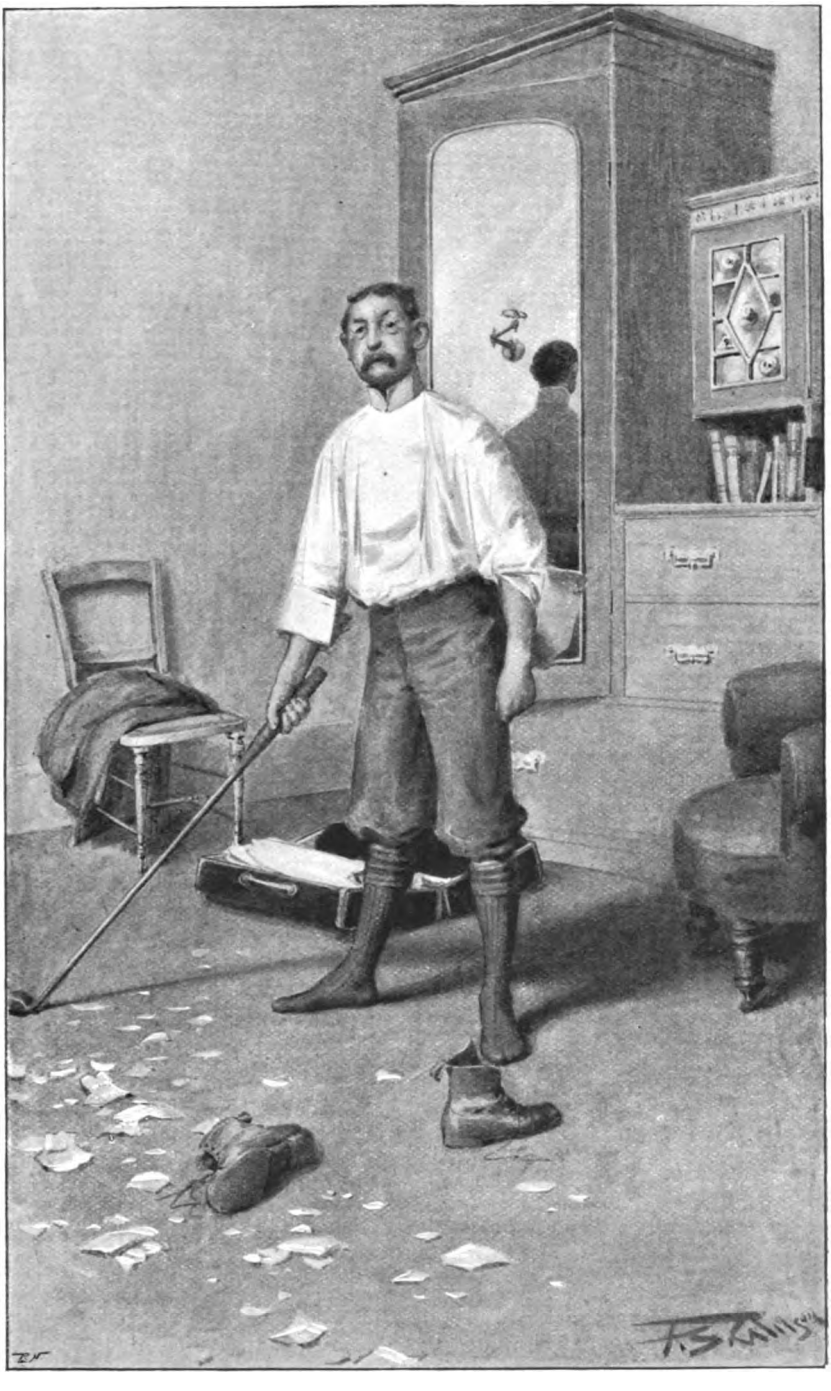
'Was unaccountably deflected—it must have been the wind; and there I was in the middle of that infern—in the middle of that disagreeable sand.'

BROWN GLARED AT HER OPEN-MOUTHED

'Oh,' cried Phyllis, turning towards him suddenly, her face beaming with sympathetic interest, 'then you lay in a niblick. It must be horrid to lie in a niblick! But I do hope you didn't ground your bunker. It is very wicked to ground your bunker when you lie in a niblick, you know.'

We both stared—indeed, Brown glared at her open-mouthed. But Phyllis seemed to be perfectly serious; so, after a painful silence, Brown went on again, evidently determined to treat this extraordinary interruption with the silent contempt it deserved.

'The fifth hole,' he resumed, 'I won, as you will doubtless remember. That was due, I think, to my approach-shot, which, I may be pardoned for saying, was a remarkably fine one.'



I FOUND BROWN IN HIS SHIRT-SLEEVES

'Then,' broke in Phyllis, recklessly, 'I suppose you used a stimie. All the best players use a stimie, rather laid back, for approach-shots.'

Poor Brown looked desperately at me, his glance clearly signifying 'Am I to be insulted in this way at your table?' Then he turned to Phyllis with a scowl that ought to have annihilated her on the spot, and remarked:

'I was—ah—talking to your husband. You, of course, are entirely ignorant of the game.'

'Not at all,' retorted Phyllis with dignity; 'I know lots about it—heaps. Why you should think that you are the only person——'

'My dear Phyllis,' I broke in, in much alarm, for it really looked as if there would be a row, 'of course you know nothing about it. Phyllis is only joking, Brown. Let me see; you were talking about the fifth hole.'

But Phyllis was not to be put off. 'I know lots about it,' she repeated, 'and I am quite certain you ought to use a stimie for an approach-shot.'

'But it's impossible,' I objected. 'A stimie isn't a club; it's——'

'At the next hole,' went on Brown, in haughty tones, ignoring my attempt at an explanation and resolutely turning away from Phyllis, 'I remember that I laid my third dead.'

'How terrible!' exclaimed the shameless Phyllis; 'I expect that was because you didn't keep your eye on the ball. It's a very common fault with beginners.'

This was too much. Brown half opened his mouth, but fortunately controlled his feelings, and with a gasp relapsed into silence. But he refused to speak another word during dinner, and, as soon as it was over, muttered something about an engagement, and fled.

Then I demanded an explanation from Phyllis.

'I don't know why the horrid man looked so annoyed,' she said resentfully; 'I did my best to talk about his wretched game.'

'But you talked the wildest nonsense,' I protested. 'How you got hold of all the words——'

'Why, you said I ought to be able "to take an intelligent interest in the conversation;" so, as soon as you had started, I took your "Badminton" book on golf, and read it all the morning. I thought you would both be so pleased!' she added plaintively.

'Good gracious!' said I; 'I begin to understand. Your idea

was most praiseworthy, only you got hold of all the technical terms and muddled them up.'

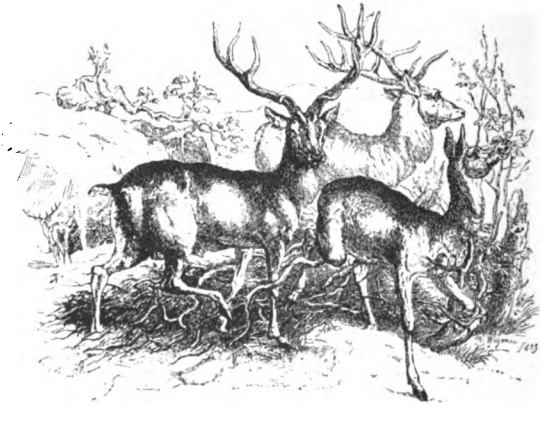
'I may have muddled them,' conceded Phyllis; 'they are very confusing. But why Mr. Brown should think——'

'Brown doubtless thinks you deliberately laid yourself out to ridicule him,' I remarked grimly; 'and small blame to him.'

'Oh, how dreadful!' cried Phyllis piteously, clasping her hands. 'Does he *really* think that? And I spent three hours over that horrid book on purpose to please him and you! Does he really think that, George?'

'Let him think,' said I with spirit. 'Anyhow, you've achieved your desire of getting rid of him; for, however often I ask him, I don't think Brown will dine here again when you're at home!'

And he hasn't.



CHILL OCTOBER

BY THE HON. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY

A FINE crisp morning, with a touch of white frost on the ground. What is to be the order of the day? The river will not fish, as there has been no rain to speak of for the last three days, and the tide will be in the lower pools, so we must go into the gunroom and consult Robert Brodie the keeper.

What a typical snuggery was the old gunroom at Poltalloch! —the cedar cupboards containing every variety of weapon in use during the past forty years, representing the progress of arms of precision from ancient muzzle-loading guns and rifles to the latest hammerless ejectors and expresses, and of fishing-rods and reels from weather-beaten hickory joints and weird multiplying brass winches with huge projecting handles, to the latest triumph of the most celebrated London, Alnwick, or Irish makers.

In the centre of the mantelpiece hangs a trophy from Canada —a huge moose's head, with each flat horn big enough to make a comfortable seat, back and all; while underneath it is a strange nondescript, so singed by a hundred candles that, were it not for the claws on the shield beside it, it would be difficult to recognise

it for the 'old man' kangaroo which turned desperately to bay after a sharp breather in South Australia. At the far end African antelopes' horns surmount a trophy of South Sea clubs which have an historical interest as well as a decorative value, for they were a gift from Captain Cook to his friend Dr. Orme—the great-grandfather of the present laird—presented just before he sailed on his last fatal voyage on July 11, 1776. In the corner are a confused bundle of old bows and arrows, a narwhal horn, and the weapon of a swordfish; while above the cupboard two miserable little red deers' heads from the island of Jura testify to the care with which the breed has been improved by Mr. Evans, the present lessee of the forest, to produce the splendid trophies which decorate his dining-room walls. How many a jolly evening have I spent in that dear old gunroom! What pleasant companions used to gather there for their sociable cigars and pipes—seated, some of them, on cartridge boxes and cane chairs, for the old prejudice against a regular smoking-room still existed. As I write I still seem to sniff the scent of the cocoanut matting, and to hear the drip of the rain from the eaves into the balcony outside—a welcome sound, as it meant a spate and the river in order before long.

A ring at the bell, and old Brodie's slow step is heard approaching along the passage—a slow step now, for he is old and 'gey stout;' but in his day there was not a better walker or a keener hand. His time on the hill is over, and now he reserves himself for a general superintendence; but what he especially loves is driving his cart along the roads when we are hunting the woods for fallow deer 'for fear they should break oot.' How often has the tootle of his horn announced that the buck has evaded us, in spite of the wheels of his chariot!

After a good deal of shouting—for old Robert is very hard of hearing, and, like many deaf persons, thinks it necessary to raise his voice, as if everybody shared his infirmity—it is arranged that Brock and I should try for a mixed bag along the river, and finish up the day by waiting under the bank of the burn in the evening between the brae face of Achnashellach and the field of oats near the river which are not yet carried, when we may hope to get some nice rocketing shots at grouse and blackcock coming in to feed. No need to go on wheels; we can start from opposite the kennels, and have the dogcart to meet us at Bridge End in the evening. And at half-past ten we duly rendezvous at the gate by the Scoinish burn, where the keeper and two gillies are waiting with an old steady pointer—and York, the antediluvian retriever.

A FINE OLD COCK-PHEASANT BLUNDERS UP JUST OPPOSITE TO ME

We take our guns at once; for there are a couple of fields of scanty turnips and potatoes between the moss and the burn, where we may find a covey of partridges to vary the bag. We mean to get at least eight sorts of game to-day; and, if lucky, we may easily do better, for I have often seen many more varieties on the ground we are to traverse in the next few hours.

We shall not long be left in doubt, for the old dog will cover the whole field in a few minutes, and, sure enough, he is feeling something now. A whirr of wings and I just stop myself in time from pulling the trigger at a half-grown hen-pheasant, and a minute or two later five partridges rise and sweep to the left across my companion, who neatly disposes of a brace. First blood for Harry! We now come to a little heathery fir plantation intersected by the road to Drimvawr. Here we go forward while it is carefully beaten through, as it almost always holds game. A fine old cock-pheasant blunders up just opposite to me, and I stop his course through the fir trees. His long spurs tell of many a year's race across the moor, and he evidently would not have risen—for there are no such refinements as stops—had he not, unfortunately for himself, shaped his course direct for my feet. We are in luck this morning, as we get two glossy old blackcocks, a pigeon, and a woodcock—probably one bred on the ground, as the flights from abroad do not begin to arrive until about the full moon on the 10th at earliest. Three roe are seen, one a buck with a pretty head; but, although we should like to add another specimen to the bag, we neither of us care to shoot at them with a smooth-bore.

A few steps onwards bring us, past a small cluster of old 'black houses,' to the foot-bridge across the Add, near Dalnahassaig. As we cross it the river looks deceptively high, but there is a deadness of the current and an oily smoothness out of the wind which reveal to the practised eye that the tide is in. A red fish—a soldier—greets us with a splash as we pass; but we pay him no attention, as we are not having what we call a 'Robinson Crusoe day' to-day. Sometimes I have visited these happy hunting-grounds with a gun, a rod, and a pea-rifle, so as to be ready to stalk a blackcock on the peat stacks with the latter weapon, or to get a duck, snipe or plover, or grouse on the edge of the moor in the intervals of flogging the pools for salmon and sea-trout; and my boys call such days 'Robinson Crusoe days,' from my fancied resemblance to the old pictures of the solitary islander parading his little kingdom with his fine assortment of weapons.

But what are those little brownish birds running about so busily beyond the cattle on the green rushy field immediately opposite the end of the bridge? Golden plovers; but in a perfectly bare open place, where there is no chance of stalking them. Still, something must be attempted to secure so acceptable an addition to the bag and the larder; and after some discussion it is settled that Harry shall creep round under the broken bank of the river, and hide himself just where there is a white gate in the iron fence, while one of the gillies stands on the bridge as a 'flanker,' and I and the others go round and try to drive them—not an easy thing to do, for they generally go where they wish, irrespective of your desires in the matter. However, an unusual, although by no means unprecedented, thing happens on this occasion. Generally these very shy birds are off with a shrill whistle long before you are within a hundred yards of them; but occasionally they have a stupid fit, and it is with surprise that I find myself within fifty and then forty yards before they take flight. Then, just as I am trying to get two or three in line, for no law is given to these migrants, they rise, and I fire one barrel at that moment and another as, with a rapid turn of the wings, altering the shape and position of the flock, they pass rather wide to the right. Two fall at once, one a runner, and another drops a hundred yards off. No very successful result, as I have often known more to fall to the shot, but the number killed at a fairly long range is rather a matter of luck than skill; and nothing comes of the ambuscade, as the flock disappears out of sight without giving my companion a chance.

Just beyond the bend of the stream is a considerable-sized swampy patch of reeds, known as the 'old river;' doubtless a former bed of the Add, which has changed its course in more than one place for natural and artificial reasons almost within living memory. This is a certain find for snipe, and must be carefully worked; so we walk along, one on each side, with the keeper between us, but not in the middle, as it would in places take him nearly over his head; but the old retriever splashes about in the centre, as if he understood and enjoyed the job—as is, indeed, the case. We have put No. 8 cartridges in the right-hand barrel, but kept our No. 5 in the left, as there may be a stray duck or some teal left, although a large flock of the former flew away when the double shot was fired at the plovers. It is wet, and tiresome walking, and none the more pleasant that the snipe seem to be wild to-day. Half a dozen are 'scape scaping' out of range of us before we have well settled to business, and the first and second

THREE OF THEM FALL TO OUR VOLLEY

shots are fruitless of result, and perhaps ought not to have been fired at all, as the birds were almost, if not quite, out of range. But the next bird rises quite close to my feet, and there was no excuse for my missing him as I did, except flurry and the provoking irregularity of his flight. However, the next two fall, and we do pretty well along the remainder of the beat, securing altogether five couple and a half, a duck, and two teal. Six of these little beauties rose within shot of Harry, and he ought to have got a right and left, but only secured one; however, he retrieved his laurels by killing the second stone dead, as the bereaved five wheeled round almost out of shot.

There is not likely to be much in the rushy field between us and Dunadd, the solitary rocky hill which rises out of the flat about a mile beyond us. There may be a hare or an odd snipe or so; but we look about us and note the flock of old blackcocks that are nearly always sitting on the edge of the moss somewhere hereabouts, but are too wary to often pay toll to the sportsman. If we tried to stalk them, the chances are that after one of us had had a long crawl in a damp drain they would be off just as he was hoping against hope for a shot, and settle again to jeer at us not far off—very likely on the bank of the 'old river' we have just left.

A blot in heaven, the raven flying high,

whose unmistakable bark calls attention to his presence, is all we see afterwards until we arrive at Dunadd, where we intend to stop for lunch.

Dunadd is a queer-shaped solitary hill rising out of the flat moss, and a keeper with a good glass can spy a poacher on any pool in the river from Kilmichael to Crinan, which accounts for the fact that rod-fishing by day is a form of poaching seldom attempted. At its foot, in a snug little recess under a rock overgrown with lastræa and lady-fern, a beautiful little ice-cold spring marks an ideal halting-place; and as it is the only one for some miles, and close to a first-rate stretch of the river, luncheon is so often served there between one and two that, but for our tidy habit of burning our paper when we light our pipes, the grass round it would resemble the Green Park after a Bank Holiday. There the game is laid out, and we dispose of half a cold grouse, some bread-and-butter, egg sandwiches with a little cress in them, and a slice of cake, washed down with the cool spring water just flavoured with the Lovat blend. A salmon from time to time splashes in the pool below us, and we can see the light form of a

fallow deer feeding on the rocky clearing in Ballimore wood opposite to us, and a pair of buzzards wheeling in broad circles round the summit of Succoth. But we must be stirring soon if we are to be at Achnashellach in time for the blackcock, and somewhat reluctantly we rise from our comfortable seats and pursue our course up the stream.

We must 'gang warily' through the hazel copse at the next bend, as there the round backwater just below the Boys pool is always a sure find for duck, and it is an easy place to get at them. Some rabbits scuttle away through the ferns, and a wood-pigeon flaps round the rowan; but we reserve our fire, and it is lucky that we do so, for eight or nine ducks rise quacking as our heads appear over the dyke, and three of them fall to our volley. A couple of snipe rise as the old dog splashes into the water after the winged mallard; but we have not got our cartridges in quick enough to secure them. A rabbit or two are rolled over as we plod through the rushes; they have an unaccountable love of burrowing in the banks of the river, although numbers are drowned whenever there is a very high flood. My little terrier generally spends the day hunting them when I am after the grilse, but he is very wary of scratching at their holes since the day he got caught in a gin; and if I see him dancing about outside an earth and giving a series of growls, I can be pretty sure that I shall find a trap there. To-day, however, we are not after bunnies, and content ourselves with just a couple to vary the bag.

Another little marsh near the Stance pool, and a stony place between two burns for which they have an unaccountable fondness, yield us a few more snipe, and we are at Kilmichael bridge; and as we walk through the farmyard of Achnashellach we can see that some at least of the grouse and blackgame are feeding on the stooks of oats in the field by the river, while more are collected on the rock among the heather and on the green patches on the brae face. The little burn fortunately flows here between steep banks in a sort of gully, and we can easily crawl to our places unperceived. It is a picked place for the sport. Birds just settling to feed generally fly low and slow, and afford an unsatisfactory mark; but here our ambuscade is in a narrow place, not in the field itself, but halfway between the high hill and the corn, and they come beautifully high in the wind. The keeper is to give us ten minutes, and then walk through the field and put up what birds are already there, and then conceal himself in the plantation beyond and watch where the birds fall. We have about an hour till dusk, and as we take up our positions some

THE OLD SULTAN CRUMPLES UP IN THE AIR

eighty yards apart we can hear the crowing of the cock grouse on the edge of the moor, and see the old blackcocks walking about on the skyline, preening their glossy feathers and showing a little of the white under their tails. A whistle from Neill tells that the birds are up, and soon a stream of more than a hundred are passing over our heads, but rather wide, and then a few stragglers. Harry accounts for three; I only get one with my two barrels, shooting a little behind the first bird through not allowing for the pace. The old cocks on the hill take not the slightest notice of the fusillade. They are some distance off, and it is noticeable how little attention these birds pay to the sound of a shot, if the sportsman who fires it is out of sight. Soon a sentinel rises from the ground and heads straight for my companion. Now let me see if he holds forward enough. They go so fast, and look as if they were travelling so slow, that it is easy enough to shoot behind them, and a few pellets too far back have no more apparent effect than a pea-shooter would produce on a tiger. But Harry is not new to the game, and the old sultan crumples up in the air and comes to the ground with a thud.

Another, then a flock, then some grouse. This afternoon we are in luck, and for a short time the fun is fast and furious. Sometimes the old stagers go on unmoved, although the shot can be heard to rattle against their breasts; but there they are well protected by the close feathers, and it really requires No. 4 to make sure of them. One drawback to our amusement is that the wind has dropped altogether, and that the 'usual evening midge' is persevering and troublesome, facing the protective tobacco-smoke with a courage worthy of a better cause. But all good things must come to end, and it is time to gather and count the slain and wend our way to the dogcart that is waiting on the bridge.

The bags are emptied and the game arranged by the side of the road, and make a picture which Weenix or Snyders would have loved to paint; only there are none of the green woodpeckers, chaffinches, and suchlike, for which either the artist or the sportsman or both used to be responsible. Nine and a half couple of snipe, five ducks, two teal, one woodcock, one pheasant, three partridges, two rabbits, seventeen grouse, twelve blackcocks, and three golden plovers - total sixty-five head and ten varieties. And as we drive home, well wrapped up, through the now frosty evening air we agree that, although neither of us despises a good day's cover shooting, such a mixed bag is worth a hecatomb of pheasants.

GOLF AND CHARACTER

BY GARDEN G. SMITH

I know you by the waggling of your head!—*Much Ado about Nothing.*

THERE is no game that reveals character so inevitably as golf, and this is probably due to the precise mingling of chance and skill of which it is compound. The game is so difficult in itself, so fraught with the unexpected, with such sudden alternations of joy and sorrow, so tremulous with hope and despair, that there are few men who can play it without betraying some weakness of their natures.

It is a cold and passionless spirit that can behold, unmoved, a fine tee shot kick, at right angles, into a bunker; and he who finds his ball there, at the bottom of the only heel mark in the hazard, and shows no sign of irritation, must be a poor creature and sadly lacking in discernment and imagination. In golf the 'what might have been' and the 'what ought to have been' of things are presented to the mind so often and with such kaleidoscopic variety, and the 'what is' is often so unjust, so hard to bear, that the galled jade must wince under the torture and give some token of its suffering.

It is true there are some griefs that lie too deep even for tears. The awful experience, related by Lord Wellwood, in the Badminton Volume, of the golfer whose ball lay dead at the last hole, and whose caddie, instead of picking the opponent's ball out of the hole, misunderstood his request and picked up *his master's ball*, to the loss of the hole and the match, is a good example of the unutterable experiences that may befall the golfer. In this case we are told that 'without a word or a sigh the bereaved golfer turned his face to the wall and went to lunch.'

Conversely, there is the righteous anger that needeth not to be repented of—as when one is driven into, on the putting green. In such a case, speech is more golden than silence. The outraged golfer can give vent to his feelings in the most unqualified terms. And he usually does.

But between these two extremes of unspeakable woes and

overmastering outrages, the golfer's pilgrimage from hole to hole is studded with sufficiently moving experiences, and there is hardly any incident in a good going match that is not full of instruction and entertainment to the student of human nature.

From a verbatim report of the casual conversation between two men playing in the final, or in a tie in an important competition, irrespective of their scores, it would be possible in most cases to say who won, and to say at what points of the game any given player was leading, or the reverse. For instance, if a man make a remark of a favourable nature to his opponent on the weather, it is not likely that he is much to the bad; nor if a player strongly expresses his opinion as to the wretched state of the putting greens would it be unsafe to assume that he is off his putting; and if he complains bitterly of the unfairness of a certain hazard, you will probably not be far wrong in concluding that he has been lately using his niblick. For it is one of the curious things about the golfer that, however logically-minded he may be in other respects, he can seldom be brought to think, or at any rate to admit, that his ill-hap is the result of his own bad play. He is an adept in the art of making things that are not, explaining away the things that are, and shows the most painstaking ingenuity in inventing reasons and causes, of course altogether beyond his control, to account for his failures. The man who said 'cupped again!' when he topped his tee shot, and the other who looked up when he missed a short putt, and cursed 'the loud lark piping its matin psalm,' are well-known examples of this phenomenon.

But it is not only by what the golfer says and by what he leaves unsaid that he reveals the working of his mind. In the ordinary affairs of business and society, men go about wearing a conventional mask, so that the weakness and strength of their natures are often hid even from themselves. On the golf green, under the stress of a tight match, these masks are thrown aside, and we see our own and our neighbours' real natures in all their nakedness. Even his actions and movements are significant not only of the golfer's present state of mind, but of his character and temperament. His personality is indelibly stamped upon his style for all who have eyes to see it. The endless variety of golfing styles is sufficient proof of this fact. The hitting of a golf ball accurately is no easy matter, and Brown, Jones and Robinson have all different views of how it ought to be done, or, at least, of how they think they can best do it. As they are in deadly earnest about it, their manner of setting about it and their execution must be full of instruction as to their ideas, and their

attitude of mind will be reflected in their attitude of body. 'There he goes, crackin' his whip!' as Bob Martin said of a golfer whose horizontal flick, innocent of swing, suggested the limited action of the coachman or the angler, and the complicated evolutions of another golfer at the tee provoked the description that 'he was wallopin' aboot on the teein' ground, like a troot oot o' the watter.' Mr. Hutchinson, in the Badminton book on 'Golf,' has given an amusing classification of various golfing styles, but has not attempted to draw from them any deductions as to the temperament or character of their exponents. But surely they are full of suggestion and enlightenment for the onlooker. For ourselves we never see the 'Headsman' style without forming the worst opinion of the character of the golfer who practises it. It may be that it is only the dreadful inheritance—acting mysteriously on the muscles of an innocent and amiable descendant—of a bloodthirsty ancestor. No doubt heredity in this and in many other golfing styles will account for much; but the 'headsman' style looks bad, and is too suggestive of unreasoning brutality to inspire aught but abhorrence.

The 'Recoil' style again, in which its possessor, immediately on striking what is invariably a very short ball, rushes backwards as if from the force of the recoil, is also an interesting one. Possibly his father was in the Artillery. Mr. Hutchinson suggests that he is a pretentious creature who wishes, by his retrograde movement, to make the stroke appear longer than it really is. If this be so, it is entirely a case of self-deception, an act of unconscious cerebration, for the Recoiler is usually an innocent and harmless person of a stout habit of body and well up in years. He is often to be seen playing billiards, where he vainly endeavours by the force and direction of his recoil to influence the movement of the balls.

But it is perhaps in the 'waggle,' in the preliminary flourishes and preparations for the stroke proper, that most character and temperament will be found.

Shakespeare's line which we have quoted at the head of this paper contains a profound golfing truth. For it is at this supreme moment, when the head of the golf club is being waggled to and fro, that the golfer is most unconscious of all outside influences, and is most completely absorbed by the business in hand. Every line of his body, every muscle of his face, the grip of his hands, and the expression of his eye will surely reveal the working of his mind, and it will be possible to prognosticate from them in most cases the success or failure of the stroke.

Every good golfer has a waggle. Human nature requires this short interval of prayer and preparation and the moving of hands, to nerve it for the stroke on which hang so many possibilities of weal or woe. A kind of golfing folk there are who have no waggle, rare indeed, and strange as rare. One comes upon isolated specimens here and there, like tailless monkeys wandering in a desert, and their manner of addressing the ball is painful in its blunt brutality. Instead of the diplomatic and coquettish flourishes, the seductive dips and courtesies of the normal golfer, one of these creatures dumps the club-head down, once for all, close behind the ball. He then assumes his stance, and transfixes the ball with a fascinating and awful glance. A gradual stiffening process of his body will then be observable, beginning with his lower limbs and proceeding up his spine and over his head until the 'rigor' has passed down his arms to the very point of his club-head. The moment that this is accomplished he draws the club-head back and brutally lashes the unsuspecting ball away.

Mercifully, the golfer without some kind of waggle is nearly always incompetent. He is usually a morose person and entirely wanting in humour and imagination. He will possibly exhibit the cheaper forms of honesty, such as paying his rent and the gas and water rates, but in a bunker he had better be watched. His absence of waggle renders him peculiarly liable to the temptation of grounding his club.

There is infinite variety in waggles. There is the short and the long and the quick and the slow, and there is the long and quick and the slow and short, as well as the short and quick and the long and slow.

There is the strong waggle of the swanky professional, and the feeble waggle of advancing eld, the depressed waggle of the dyspeptic, and the exuberant flourish that bespeaks a good digestion. You may contrast the careful waggle of the lawyer or business man with the reckless passes of the 'ne'er-do-well,' or the conceited waggle of the 'plus' man with the humbler preludes of his plodding brother.

There is the waggle that denotes a world of energy and intention, and the waggle that is but a putting off of time and a weariness to behold; but all are reflexes of their owners' attitude of mind, all supply the key to their golfing capacity, and probably no single act that they perform unconsciously is a surer index of their personality and character.

I know you by the waggling of your head!

AN AFTERNOON RIDE IN FLORIDA

BY FANNY HUGHES D'AETH

My six months' visit to Florida was all too rapidly drawing to a close, in fact there was barely a week left, when one lovely day towards the middle of March I decided to ride out to a certain marsh about five miles from my brother's place, and a very favourite spot of mine. Dinner was over by 12.30—for we keep early hours in that strange country, where men work literally from sun up to sun down in the winter—and directly after I made my way through the orange grove down to the 'lot' where the horses were turned out, and of course found them all down at the very furthest corner, by the 'branch,' or little stream which ran through a tangle of palmetto scrub into the hammock beyond. The big, white-legged chestnut looks at me doubtfully as I pass—he thinks I surely cannot want him again so soon, after having taken him a hot dusty drive that morning; that good grey horse 'Peter' scarcely takes any notice of me—his work is to help 'Punch,' the huge bay mule, in the tram, and he knows as well as any one that his hour is not yet come. But I want 'Gip,' the sturdy roan cob, who flings up her heels protestingly as I go towards her, and looks as if she meant to lead me a dance before allowing herself to be caught, but then thinks better of it, and contents herself with dashing off to the barn as hard as she can go, where I find her a few moments after, looking the picture of innocence.

To brush her down, saddle her, and hitch her to the gatepost is not a lengthy business, and five minutes later I have donned boots and habit, called the dogs, and we are ready to start. 'Bob,' 'Venus,' and 'Jim' are pointers, or 'smell dogs,' nearly nine months old, and they are mad with delight at the prospect

of a run; their uncle, 'Bacchus,' is very anxious to come too; but he is a perverter of canine morals, and the pups would learn sad habits from his example, so I had to harden my heart very unwillingly, and order him back. However, finding that Ted, who is cook, housemaid, laundrymaid, and general factotum to the establishment, is going to cut up half a side of venison, he thinks he might do worse than stop at home and get all the titbits to himself, so gives in with a good grace; and off we go, first turning off to the lumber-yard, where the big steam sawmill is at work, to see if the tram had brought any mail for me that day. The mill always had a great fascination for me, and I was never tired of watching it at work, and the huge logs with which it was kept continually supplied quickly reduced to planks, &c., of the required size, and passed on to their appointed place, making way on the saw table for the next pine log. A constant supply is kept up by the logging carts—very similar to an ordinary timber jigger, some drawn by two or more yoke of oxen of an irritating slowness of progression, and driven by a man who must surely be possessed of the patience of Job, others by the more active and generally vicious mules, whose teamster rides the near wheeler and drives the whole lot from his saddle. Some of these men are masters of their art, and it is a treat to see them at it. Just as I rode up a team of bay mules had deposited a huge tree on the log-way, and had started off to the woods for another in very lively fashion; for the leaders were youngsters and new to the business, and somewhat alarmed by the din and bustle of the sawmill. But their 'driver' was quite equal to the occasion, and scrambling quickly into his high peaked wooden saddle, gathered up his reins in less time than it takes to write, and with a couple of well-directed cuts from his terror of a whip at his refractory leaders he swept away in grand style, making way for two yoke of grunting oxen which were slowly hauling an enormous log up to the mill to a running accompaniment of 'Gee Buck, Gee Ben,' and vigorous poppings of a long-handled whip, wielded with much effect by their driver, in both hands. On the opposite side of the mill a load of lumber was being piled on to the tramcar, which runs (on whole unbarked pine trunks for rails) from the mill to the nearest dépôt, two miles distant, and drawn by the aforementioned Peter and Punch, hitched tandem fashion, a novel way of harnessing out there, and one which caused intense amusement to the crackers when they first saw it done. A little to my right was the store, where several men were lolling idly over the counter, or sitting on barrels, dangling their legs and 'chewing'—

with the inevitable result—in true American fashion. But the dogs are asking me quite unmistakably if I ever mean to start; so, having made sure no mail had come for me, I turned my cob's head, and we set off.

It was a glorious day—a trifle hot, perhaps; but I had several hours in front of me, so there was no need to hurry; and Gip was a very free walker, getting over a lot of ground at that pace. My way lay through a fairly open tract of pine woods with a scanty undergrowth of palmetto and coarse grass, the latter just beginning to show a most vivid green where a new crop was springing up after the annual forest fires had burnt off what was

GIP FLINGS UP HER HEELS

left of the old one. The soil is loose white sand, in some places several inches deep, which makes it very heavy going when driving. Occasionally we come upon one of the inevitable ponds or lakelets, with which the whole country is studded from end to end, quite distinct from the real lakes, some of which are regular inland seas, and very beautiful; but beyond a casual blue heron, or sandhill crane, or a few ibis, these ponds are singularly devoid of bird life, though the ever-cheerful frog makes almost incessant music in and around them, from the harsh 'crek, crek' of some to the lively little chirrup of others; but I never once heard the peculiar note of the gigantic bullfrog. Being out there in the winter, I did not come in for animal life at its best; but as far as

snakes were concerned I was not sorry, and towards the end of my stay I came upon an occasional black snake or two, which are harmless; and one day the boys brought in a rattler which they had just shot in the strawberry patch. When skinned it measured nearly six feet, and was a very finely marked specimen. But snakes do not appeal to me, and I infinitely prefer their room to their company.

On coming to the first pond that afternoon the puppies splash and dash through the shallow water, thoroughly enjoying a bath after their hot and dusty gallop, while Gip paces slowly through, as though to make the most of it, pawing the water at every step, and sending a shower of sprinkles up to my very shoulders. Just as we got across the dogs put up a rabbit lying in a bunch of coarse grass, and instantly begin to give chase, though they know perfectly well it is quite against the rules; but by dint of sundry cracks of my whip and stern orders to ''Ware rabbit!' they remember previous warnings on the same subject, and reluctantly come in. Poor little pups! they are possessed with a burning desire to hunt everything they see, so have to be whipped off everything but their lawful prey, viz. quail, and in consequence are beginning to wonder what they may hunt with impunity. Larks are a great temptation, as they have a very gamey smell, like their brethren in the old country. They are fine handsome birds, much larger than English ones, and in plumage closely resemble a yellowhammer.

The chief animals we meet are hogs, which roam about the pine woods in a semi-wild state. I used to think the common or garden Kent sow bore off the palm for general hideosity and ungainliness, but she is a model of beauty and elegance compared to her Florida relations. High on the leg, with long snout and huge pendulous ears, roach-backed, flat-sided, and covered with a thick coat of coarse bristles, generally of a mustardy brown, the Florida 'razorback' yields to none among the porcine race for utter ugliness and repulsiveness. Cows, too, in plenty we meet, small at the best of times, but now looking sad and lean beyond description; for the forests were fired some time back, and everything in the way of vegetation burnt up, so that it is a wonder any cattle have survived at all. That crowds of them do succumb to starvation is painfully evident by the awful smells that have to be ridden through pretty constantly now, to say nothing of seeing their dead bodies in all stages of decomposition, each with its attendant train of buzzards, as the vultures are called, which hardly trouble themselves to do more than hop heavily a few yards off as one

rides by. Of the human species I meet very few samples, in fact only two. Once it was a typical cracker in his buggy, who doffed his broad-brimmed hat with a polite 'Good evening, ma'am,' and remarked that, having all those smell dogs, it was a pity I had no gun; and a little time after I meet G——, a young English fellow staying with our nearest neighbour, about three miles off, and just now on his way to the mill for a load of lumber, as he says they are building a wharf at his host's place on Lake Gibson, He is driving a sturdy little chestnut mare in a waggon, and has a gun and a couple of pointers with him, hoping to get a shot at quail on the way. Of course we stop for a few minutes' conversation, while the dogs fraternise at the tops of their voices, till

GIP PACES SLOWLY THROUGH

called to order by their respective owners, and once more we move on our way.

Occasionally we ride past a derelict orange grove, the little log-house looking very forlorn and deserted, and where orange and grape fruit trees once flourished only a vigorous crop of fennel, six feet high, more or less, is to be seen, as is invariably the case on land that has gone out of cultivation. One feature that gives a very gloomy and untidy look to many of the orange groves, whether past or present, is the huge dead pines, stripped of bark to their very tops, left standing just to save the labour of cutting them down and moving them away, which of course would be considerable. When land is cleared for use these pines are killed

by the simple process of 'girdling'—that is, a ring is cut through the bark, right round the trunk, about two or three feet above the ground; this stops the flow of sap, and ultimately kills the tree. In course of time the bark falls off, but the dead trunks stand for years, until they are either burnt down by a forest fire or succumb to a storm. Seen when one is riding through the woods on a moonlight night, as I often did—to say nothing of dark ones—their tall, gaunt forms have a very weird and ghostly effect. Just past one of these deserted groves the track lay through a 'branch,' or streamlet, running through a belt of hammock to the nearest lake—the water a beautiful mahogany-red colour from the cypress roots, and as clear as glass. Pretty little spots some of these 'branches' make, the edges of the pools fringed with lilac-coloured water-hyacinths, yellow iris, and 'bonnets,' which are a sort of water-lily, as well as many other aquatic plants; and the trees in the hammock are draped with wild vines, virginia creeper, and jessamine. Some way on from the branch we passed a very prosperous-looking grove, the original log-hut having just been replaced by a nice frame house with glazed windows and a brick chimney—the latter a great luxury, and all the result of successful strawberry-growing by its cracker proprietor.

A little further and we leave the main track and bear off to the left a bit, and here the puppies come upon a small gopher, or tortoise, which excites tremendous curiosity; but they look up at me rather doubtfully, as if to ask if this too is forbidden fruit. 'What is it, Bob? what is it, little Venus?' They know from my voice that it is all right, and for a few moments life is a decided success with such a toy as a gopher to play with; and as they cannot possibly hurt it, I do not interfere with their gambols, but they soon leave off on their own account. About another mile and we paddle along the edge of quite a big lagoon for some hundred yards, startling a few white ibis as the cob splashes through the water; yet a little further through a lot of oak saplings, where some lovely cardinal birds in their brilliant plumage make a charming dash of colour against the dark foliage; then through another tract of pine wood, where the palmetto undergrowth is high and strong, and finally we come out on the edge of Parker Marsh, our goal.

On three sides it is surrounded by the grim, silent, pine woods, and on the fourth by a 'hammock'—a kind of jungle where black gum, hickory, cypress, maple, &c., grow, now all in the first brilliance of their spring clothing. Just at the spot where I come out of the woods the track runs through the water for a

few hundred yards, nearly up to my cob's knees, and swarming with little frogs and minnows. I make for a big oak a little way ahead, its branches nearly smothered with huge festoons of beautiful grey Spanish moss, which adorns almost every tree in the country, more or less. As I near it the splashing of my cob through the water startles a magnificent sandhill crane only a few yards off, but till that moment unseen behind high tussocks of reeds and grass. He does not seem to trouble himself much about us, but slowly and majestically he rises, and flaps his dignified way across to a neighbouring elevation. A little further on a whole cloud of ibis suddenly get up from the edge of the water, and round and round they wheel, uttering their plaintive, piping cry. The adult birds are white as snow, the young ones a dirty grey. Through more water I made my way to a little clump of young oaks, and, standing back under their shade, took a look round. Close at hand a superb white heron was feeding in solitary state, and a little to the left a bunch of fussy little 'kildee,' not at all unlike our ringed plover, were twisting and whirling round, uttering a sharp 'twee, twee.' Away on the right I could hear the shrill cry of a kittihawk, while far above my head, looking mere specks against the sky, a couple of turkey-buzzards were slowly soaring. Some little time I stayed there, the dogs, tired at last, resting peacefully under the oaks, Gip cropping the scanty grass, and no other living creature near but all the wild marsh life that I love. There was a cloudless sky of perfect blue; the afternoon sun was shimmering on the stretches of water around us, while the long dry reeds and grasses whispering in the quiet breeze, and the varied notes of the birds all over the marsh, were the only sounds to be heard. But time was getting on, and at length I reluctantly turned my cob's head homewards, and called up the dogs; but several times I stopped to have another look before I reached the shadow of the pine woods again, and could see the marsh no longer. I cantered leisurely home in the cool of the evening. It was growing late when I got back, and the voices of the night were beginning to be heard in the woods around. A roll in the sand when the side-saddle was removed, a vigorous shake, a long drink at the water-butt, and Gip's toilet was finished; the dogs rushed away to the kitchen to see what the gods—in the likeness of Ted—had provided for supper, and so ended my farewell ride to Parker Marsh. A few days later I was on my long homeward journey of close on five thousand miles, genuinely sorry to leave Florida, where I had made many friends and had had a thoroughly good time all round.

STANDING BACK UNDER THEIR SHADE, TOOK A LOOK ROUND

A WILD GOOSE CHASE

BY THE HON. J. N. KIRCHHOFFER

MOOSEJAW is a thriving town on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, about thirty miles west of Regina, the capital of the North-West Territories. Some five-and-twenty miles north of Moosejaw lies Buffalo Lake, about twenty miles long and from one to two miles wide. When the annual autumn migration begins from the immense northern breeding-grounds on the shores of the Hudson's Bay, the Yukon, and the Arctic Circle, the geese drop into Buffalo Lake in vast numbers; and although there is a constant movement to the southward, the places vacated are as constantly filled up by new arrivals, and many remain till driven out by the freezing over of the lakes in the beginning of November. They find a very attractive feeding-ground in the extensive wheat stubbles which surround the lake, and are very regular in their habits. At daybreak they fly from the lake and feed on the stubbles till ten or eleven o'clock, when they return to the water, flying out again a couple of hours before sundown, and returning at dusk to roost for the night; so that those who are well acquainted with their habits and the lie of the country can get three or four flights during the day.

When I was there, the huge Canada goose (known as 'Honker' from his cry) seemed to predominate, but there were many other varieties. The Hutchins goose, which appeared to be a smaller edition of the Canada, almost identical in its marking and plumage, was very plentiful; while the Bean goose, the Laughing and White-fronted goose, and the Brant, were all more or less numerous.

At this sportsman's paradise I had enjoyed a big shoot in the fall of 1895, and during the subsequent Parliamentary session at Ottawa my glowing account of it had so fired the imagination and inflamed the ardour of Captain Wilberforce, A.D.C. to His Excellency the Governor-General, that he announced his intention of joining me in 1896 in a trip over the same ground. Plans were made and arrangements perfected, but, as usual, were upset and altered. It was not until October 7, two weeks later than the date originally fixed upon as the best for us to start, that I received a telegram informing me that my friend had just left Ottawa; and some sixty hours later he joined me at Brandon, my Manitoba home.

The following day, Saturday, we devoted to grouse (or prairie chicken), shooting amongst the bluffs north of the town, having excellent sport and securing a mixed bag of considerable dimensions, a photograph of which is, as the lawyers say, hereto annexed, marked 'Exhibit A.'

Taking the train that night, the following morning found us in Moosejaw, where we were cordially greeted by my friend

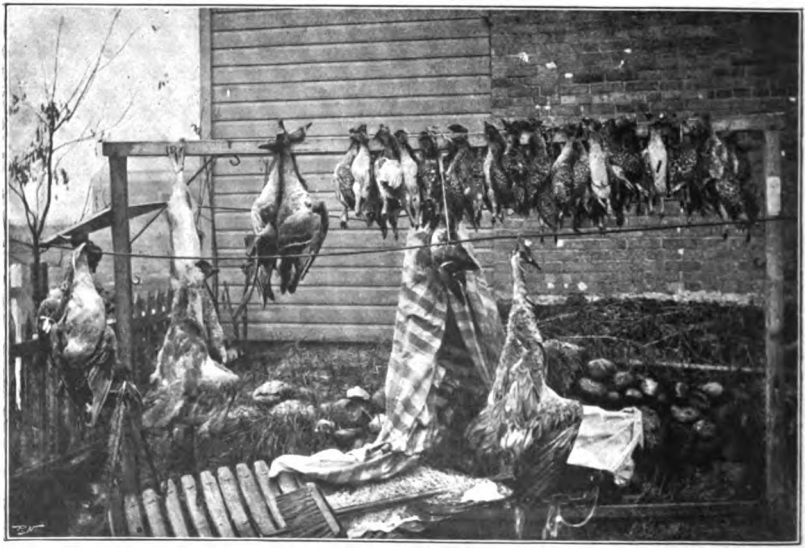


EXHIBIT A

Arthur Hitchcock, the local banker, an excellent shot, and well posted in all the arts necessary to circumvent the wily goose. Unfortunately, press of business prevented him from accompanying us; but he lent us his decoys and call, and gave us a

letter to one of his tenants residing close to the lake, at whose house we were to put up. After an early dinner we hired a livery team and prepared to start for the lake. I took my Tolley 10-bore, a heavy gun chambered for big charges, which I had bought specially for this class of shooting. The Captain used a No. 12. Recollecting that when driving out over the same road the previous year I had got into the afternoon flight of birds coming from the lake and enjoyed excellent sport, I advised him to uncase his gun and open the box which contained his cartridges, but he pointed out that it was Sunday. He had been carefully brought up; his father was a high dignitary in some cathedral at home, and he never 'unlimbered' on the Sabbath, especially as there is a Canadian statute against it, and he was determined not to break the law. So we started on our journey; my companion, who drove, is a most genial fellow, and had hunted all sorts of birds and animals in far, fair foreign lands—

He had stalked the wily red deer
On the Grampians, never dry;
Potted seals near Corrievrechan,
Tigers in the dusk Terai—

but he had never shot a goose, and was very keen to do so.

After about an hour's driving we came to the place where I had caught the flight the previous year. Even as I was telling him about it we saw on the horizon a thin irregular line that wavered and changed form from time to time.

'Geese!' we exclaimed simultaneously.

'Pity it's Sunday,' I said.

'Ay, 'tis,' said he; and the flock, struggling low against the wind, passed out to our left. But even while we gazed another hove in sight, and beyond that still another, till the sky, as far as the eye could reach, was filled with them.

'I can't stand this!' said my companion as, pulling up the horses and throwing the reins on the dash-board, he jumped down and began to pull his gun from under the seat.

'But what about the day?' I said.

'The day's all right,' he replied.

'But the Canon?' I urged. 'What would he say?'

'My dear old Senator, it's not the Canon, it's the gun I'm thinking about.'

'But,' said I, desperately, 'you'll be breaking the law.'

'Oh, hang the law!' he responded, as he strove with the blade of a penknife to break open the wooden case that contained his cartridges, but in vain.

'Now,' said I, 'let this be a lesson to you never to travel unprepared in this country;' and giving him my Tolley and my bag of shells, I drove hastily for half a mile to where the flight seemed thickest, and letting him out where a furrow, ploughed on the prairie to mark a road allowance, offered some slight concealment, I galloped back so as to be out of the way, and stood to watch the performance.

Unfortunately the hide was so slight that he was easily seen, and many of the flocks either swerved or towered; but presently I could see him straighten up, and two huge birds came tumbling from the sky. This occurred again and again, until, when the flight had passed and I rejoined him, he had eight big Canada 'Honkers' in his pile, and even then he had not tested the capacity of my 10-bore, as scores of flocks passed by, which, if he had only let go at them, would certainly have left some of their number behind. There were still a couple of birds which had fallen on the prairie within half a mile; but the day was wearing away, and we had ten miles yet to go, so they had to be abandoned, and luckily we so decided, for it was nearly dark when we discovered the farmhouse at which we were to rest for the night.

The settler, named Humphreys, had been an under-keeper on an English estate, and was delighted to see us. He had holes dug for us in the stubble, but said that the geese had pretty well cleaned off all the fields in the vicinity of the lake, and he feared we would have poor success there. We were very hospitably entertained, however, and after an excellent supper retired to a comfortable couch.

It was long ere daylight when we were aroused, and after a hasty meal took possession of the holes in the stubble that had been prepared for us. These were some twenty-five yards apart and some four feet deep, long enough to move round in comfortably, and with the earth left at one end to form a seat. The soil which had been thrown out was carefully scattered, and straws were thrown over it; for your goose is a wily bird and sharp-sighted, and at once distinguishes any alteration in the ground upon which he has been accustomed to feed. Midway between us, and a few yards in front of the holes, a dozen tin decoys were set up, and my companion practised upon a call, which, although in his hands it emitted a weird sound unlike anything I ever heard made by a goose, seemed occasionally effective in attracting flocks when once they came within earshot.

Although a mile from the lake, we could hear the dull murmur of the thousands of birds feeding and cackling. As day dawned,

there was a roar of wings, and soon against the horizon we could see line after line of birds winging their way to distant pastures, but far to the east of us. At last a flock appeared heading our way, and as they passed high overhead four shots rang out and three birds came down with a thump that one would think must break every bone in their bodies. But though we sat there for another hour we only got one more good chance, bagging a brace, after which, the flight being over, we adjourned to breakfast. As it was quite evident that the birds did not stop there, our only chance was to follow their line and try to locate their feeding-ground.

Accordingly after breakfast we hitched up and, with Humphreys to drive, started on a voyage of discovery. At each farm we came to we inquired, 'Do the geese feed here?' and the reply came 'No; they used to feed here earlier in the season, but they pass high over now.'

At length, after travelling some fifteen miles, it began, as the children say, 'to get warm.' Some flocks had dropped here and there, and at last we reached a farm where they had been feeding for some days, but on the previous day had mostly moved to the next farm, and had been there in thousands that morning.

Would we stay? We were welcome to put up the horses, and we could have beds for the night. This was enough. We had soon unhitched and enjoyed a hearty meal. We determined we would not shoot on the feeding-ground that evening, but get somewhere in the line of flight at a distance from it. This we did, and about four o'clock the geese began to arrive, and soon were passing overhead in myriads, but very high. We took toll out of them to the extent of ten, but were overjoyed to see that the main body settled down on the next farm, where a prairie fire had run through a piece of wheat, leaving the blackened ground covered with roasted ears, with a few strips of wheat, which had escaped the fire, standing at intervals. There we could see the birds on a constant move, rising every now and again in a huge cloud and settling a little farther on, while their incessant cackling could be plainly heard, till at dusk they rose with a noise like thunder and winged their way back to the lake.

After supper, Humphreys and one of the sons of the house took a lantern, went down to the feeding-ground, and dug two holes, to be ready for the morning flight; and then we all turned in, the old lady protesting that she was up every morning at four and would rouse us all.

I awoke with a start and looked at my watch. It was five

o'clock, and not a soul was stirring; but the noise I had made aroused the others, and soon a fire was lit and the water boiling. A cup of tea was all I wanted; but the lady of the house insisted on our eating breakfast, and that caused delay. I asked if the team was ready.

'Why,' said our host, 'it isn't half a mile to where the holes are dug. You would not want the team hitched up for that.'

'All right,' I said; 'but we should be starting now.'

'Oh, sir, there's no hurry,' said Humphreys. 'You remember there wasn't a bird flying yesterday till quarter to seven. It is only quarter-past six now, and they would certainly take a quarter of an hour to fly this far.'

And so another precious fifteen minutes had been cut to waste when we emerged from the house.

The east was beginning to brighten, and as we stepped outside I heard the 'whish' of wings overhead.

'Thunder!' said Humphreys, 'they're here. We must run for it.' That was all very well. There was a time when that wouldn't have troubled me much. I had won the school half-mile at Marlborough, but that was thirty years ago, and I now weigh close on seventeen stone.

'Humphreys,' I gasped, 'this is your fault. Where is the hide you dug for me?'

'To the east of that shanty,' he replied, pointing to a dim object apparently about two miles away. I thought it was five before I got there.

'Now,' said I as we ran along, 'you take the Captain and get him into his hide, and then come after me;' and they vanished into the gloom. I proceeded at the double in heavy marching order. I had my big 10-bore under one arm and half a dozen tin decoys under the other, while round my neck was slung my cartridge bag with one hundred rounds of heavily loaded shells. Every now and again the bag would swing round and thump me on the pit of the stomach; then a couple of the decoys would slip backwards from under my arm, and as I stooped to pick them up the remainder would clatter down in front. The never-ceasing 'whish' of wings and cackle of voices and ghostly figures passed overhead, while that infernal phantom shanty seemed to recede as I floundered on.

Presently two flashes of flame leaped into the air ahead of me, and I shortly came upon the Captain squatting in some wheat, while Humphreys was putting out his decoys. The latter, thoroughly rattled, had been unable to locate the hole, though it

'WELL, SIR, YOU HAVE BEEN A-PULLING THEM DOWN'

was somewhere close by, and the Captain had declared he would go no farther and was loosing off his piece right and left. I still pressed forward, until at last, thoroughly exhausted, my head swimming and my eyes dim, I felt I could almost lie down and die.

It was now broad daylight. I lay down in a strip of wheat on my back, and as soon as I could get my breath, I began firing at the flocks which streamed overhead. Every now and then I could hear a thud, as heavy bodies struck the ground; and presently Humphreys came running up.

'Well, sir, you have been a-pulling them down,' he exclaimed, 'and here's your hide close by;' and soon I was comfortably seated and beginning to recover. The birds were still coming thick and fast, and my comrade was making good practice. Flock after flock I could see swing to his decoys, and sometimes one bird, sometimes a couple, would be left behind. Unfortunately he was just in front of me, about three hundred yards, and the geese, as soon as shot at, started to climb; and but for the superior shooting powers of the 10-bore, my chances would have been poor. However, I did fairly well, though again I had borne in on me a lesson—viz., that it is possible to miss a goose. It seemed incredible sometimes how birds would escape that, had they been snipe, I am satisfied could not have got away from me. The explanation undoubtedly is that these birds are so large, and fly with such an apparently slow, lazy flap of the wing, that one can scarcely believe they are really moving at the rate of eighty or ninety miles an hour. You can hardly bring yourself at first to make the allowance in front that you would do, for instance, to a teal bustling by at the same pace; and therefore many a bird, hard hit maybe, but too far back, will stick to the flock till it gets out of sight. Again, the size of the birds often makes them appear much closer than they really are, and there is considerable deception in the early morning light.

This flight lasted altogether about an hour, and, as I have stated, was fast and furious. When at last it ceased, we proceeded to gather the slain. Fortunately, upon the burnt prairie the bodies were easily discernible, and with Humphreys' assistance I soon had two-and-twenty collected. We then joined the Captain.

'How many have you got?'

'Well,' he replied, 'I have kept pretty good count, and I must have knocked down thirty.'

He had gathered about twenty, and we all tramped through

the standing wheat in which he had been concealed till we found three or four more. Then, leaving the other two to construct a better hide for the afternoon flight, I went back to the house, and got the farmer's waggon to bring in the birds.

First, however, I drove a mile or more in the direction in which the geese had flown after passing over my head, and was rewarded by picking up four more dead birds, bringing our total for that one flight to fifty-one head; and any one who has not seen that number of geese laid out in rows can hardly imagine the show that they made. I do not doubt that, if we had been in our hides fifteen minutes earlier, we would have added a score or more to the bag.

At three in the afternoon we were all prepared, and expected to have a great shoot; but the fusillade of the morning was evidently too much for them, and the main body of the geese passed away beyond us. A few odd flocks came, and from these we knocked down ten, but the following morning we never got a shot at all.

Soon after breakfast, therefore, we took our team and returned to the town, hiring the farmer's boy to follow with the geese, after distributing a generous number amongst the settlers on whose farms we had been shooting.

Our bag totalled eighty-five, and we were very anxious to get a photograph of ourselves in full war-paint with our birds. We were much disappointed, however, to find that the town of Moosejaw did not boast a photographer, and we reluctantly donned our everyday clothes for the train journey.

Not long before starting, Hitchcock came and told us that the postmaster was an amateur artist, and would 'take' us, and send the plate away for development; and thus was produced the photograph ('Exhibit B') in which the Captain appears in white linen, and not at all as though he had lived in a hole in the ground for the last two days.

This explanation is given in deference to public opinion as conveyed in scoffing letters from friends as to our attire. My friend Mr. Shaughnessy, vice-president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to whom I had guilelessly sent one of the photos, chose to remark in acknowledging it: 'I must say that the civilisation of the North-West must be of a super-refined character, when even the geese won't come out to meet you unless you wear white shirts and swallow-tail coats.'

Taking the east-bound train at five o'clock, we reached Qu'Appelle Station about eight, and the following day (Thursday

morning) we drove out to Fort Qu'Appelle for some duck-shooting with a friend named Iredale, who has a shooting-lodge at the upper end of the lake.

EXHIBIT B

This is a wonderful place for the making of a big bag in the early part of the season. The lake, twenty miles long, is divided from the interminable marsh beyond, with the river winding through it, by a narrow neck of land across which an incessant flight is kept up between marsh and lake. It was here that three

years ago we made a record bag—six guns getting eleven hundred ducks in two days. But that was at the end of August; and now, nearly two months later, the myriads of teal and summer ducks had gone south, the mallard and canvas-backs with some blue-bills and pin-tails alone remaining.

We went out early on Friday morning, the Captain being paddled by Iredale, while I had Jack Leader, an ex-member of the Mounted Police force. Birds were not very plentiful at the near end of the marsh, but we got a couple of dozen between us. After breakfast the Captain was placed at a bend of the river, where we had seen a good flight passing in the morning; with a flock of decoys in front of him, Iredale paddled for miles up the river to keep the birds moving, while Leader and I took the centre of the marsh. We all had good sport. The Captain, who disdained to shoot at any of the smaller ducks, brought in eighteen mallards; Iredale got forty-one ducks, and Leader and I forty-five; but we lost a great many birds, as the marsh was very thick.

It turned cold that evening, and next morning the marsh was frozen so that we could not push the canoe through it. But Leader and I got thirty-six canvas-backs on the lake, while the other two made a big bag of mallards on the river. We knocked off at noon, and while walking back to the lodge, along the edge of the marsh, Wilberforce and I bagged twenty-three brace of snipe in less than an hour—a most agreeable wind-up to our shoot at that place.

We drove back to the main line that evening, taking the east-bound train at eight o'clock, passing Brandon at six A.M. (where we were joined by W. S. Cottingham, an old shooting partner of mine), and reaching Poplar Point Station at ten o'clock, our objective point being the marshes round Lake Manitoba.

Here I keep a canoe and have a half-breed friend, John Atkinson by name, who paddles me about whenever I can get away for a few days at the ducks; and here I intended that the Captain should remain until the lake froze up.

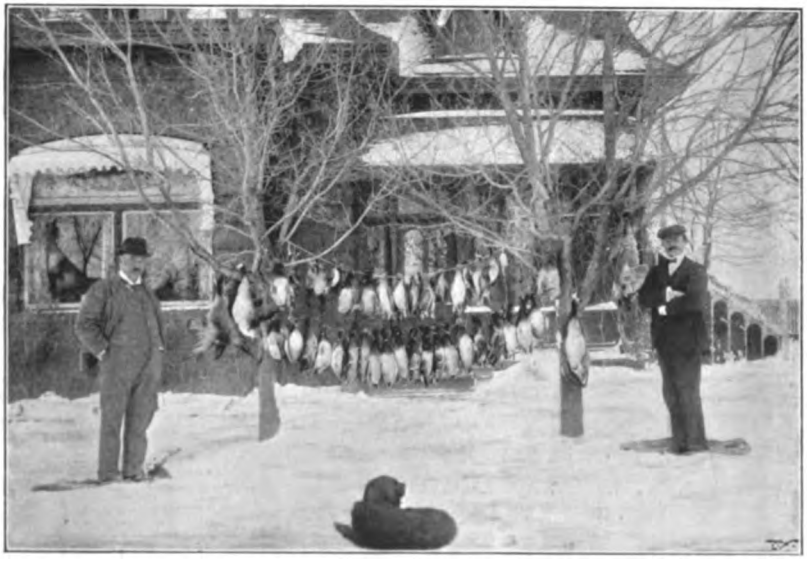
A two hours' drive brought us to the lake, where Atkinson had the camp prepared; and on Monday morning we took our canoes and decoys—Cottingham and I in one boat, while Atkinson paddled the Captain—and went away up the marsh.

There were lots of birds, and as soon as we came to a likely spot we shoved one canoe into the rushes and put out the decoys, while Atkinson took the other canoe about a mile further up the bay.

In a few hours Cottingham and I got fifty birds—mallards, canvas-backs, gadwalls, pin-tails, shovellers, and blue-bills—and could have much increased the bag, but that a heavy wind having sprung up and a storm impending, which made getting back to the camp a matter of some difficulty, we had to pull up stakes early in the afternoon. The Captain, who would shoot at no smaller ducks while his favourite quarry was in sight, brought in forty-three mallards.

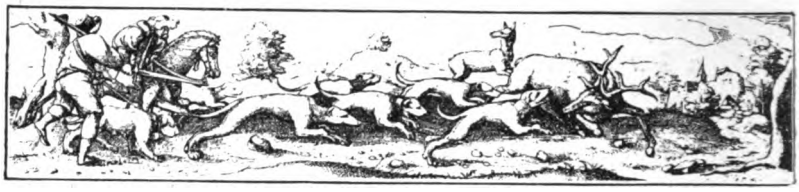
This ended my shooting, as the next day I had to return home; but the Captain remained out till the end of the month, enjoying excellent sport throughout, and was only induced to leave when the lake finally froze up.

It was after his return that the third photograph ('Exhibit C') was taken, with the proceeds of the last two or three days' sport in evidence; and this is chaffingly and appropriately denominated 'in cold blood' by the lady whose shadowy face peers



'In cold Blood'

at us from the window as we are shiveringly focussed. Here the experienced eye can distinguish geese, mallards, canvas-backs, and prairie chicken; while over my friend's shoulder hangs a huge sandhill crane, whose capture was a triumph and a fitting wind-up to a most excellent month's sport.



THE GRIFFIN IN INDIA

BY COLONEL T. S. ST. CLAIR

ALAS, no! The Griffin in India is by no means that sporting-looking animal, part lion, part eagle, which in our heraldic ignorance we are apt to confound with the winged dragon, and to associate in our walks past the new Law Courts with the old site of Temple Bar. Alas, no! Would that he were; for then there would be no scarcity of sport to which the term 'noble' could in justice be applied, whilst our Lord Mayors' Mansion House banquets would escape for once their wearisome monotony, in the pleasurable anticipation of a gastronomic novelty. Is it possible to fancy a battue with rocketing Griffins? or, better still, imagine, if you can, a drive of these glorious animals. How your heart thumps with almost audible pulsations as you observe that pack of Griffins, their wings outstretched, coming silently and steadily down wind towards you, at the rate of some sixty miles an hour. How you drop the leading brace, right and left, followed possibly by a third as they are fast disappearing—and the subsequent retrieving of the game! Why, St. George on his barebacked steed would never realise the sport, could he return to share in it, whilst he would sit aghast at the summary disposal in one drive of sufficient game to have lasted him a twelvemonth.

But away with such idle frivolities! Unless the old lady is still alive who believed her nautical grandson's story of bringing up on the fluke of his anchor a wheel of one of Pharaoh's chariots in the Red Sea, in preference to his tale of a flying-fish, it is scarcely necessary perhaps for me to say that the Griffin in India is the newly arrived youngster, the embryo organiser, administrator and sportsman, before whom the vastest possibilities lay, and out of whom are manufactured those admirable examples of civil and military officials who are to be found broadcast throughout the country, the product of our nationality and of our system combined, and to whom is due the credit of making this

grandest dependency of the British Crown one of the existing wonders of the world.

But, much as I should like to paint in glowing colours the unwearying, self-sacrificing devotion to duty, and the absolute integrity and strict impartiality, which mark our countrymen in undertaking, even when young in years, the vast responsibilities they do with such success in the distant East, I feel that my theme is the Griffin, and that to him must my remarks be confined. Let me go back, then, in memory some thirty-two years, when I first embarked on Indian service, and endeavour to recall the prospect before the newly arrived youngster. How I envy his sensations on first landing, especially if this be his first foreign station and his first acquaintance with the East! The novelty of the ordinary sights, the astonishment at native customs and everyday occurrences, such as the caste marks of the men or the rings in the noses of the women, the variegated colours of pugarees and cummerbunds, with the street scenes, bullock carts, bheesties, camels, and perhaps an occasional elephant moving calmly amidst the crowd—these and numerous other Oriental sights combine to render an Indian town, on first acquaintance, very like a scene from the Arabian Nights tales, an experience quite different from any yet met with. And as our Griffin travels up-country he finds that, whilst the novelty of first impressions naturally wears off, there is still much to excite his curiosity, and possibly his admiration; whilst the special features of a tropical country, the new character of the trees and vegetation, the different varieties of insects and birds, together with, if he is marching, the abundance of small game and the possibility of deer or larger animals, all combine to make him realise that he is at last in the land of sport and adventure, offering grand and unexpected opportunities, far beyond his preconceived expectations.

Most of the country through which I marched as a Griffin is now traversed by the railway, and although for this reason, and in consequence of the increased number of shooters, sporting localities have doubtless contracted, necessitating greater distances, still the actual circumstances cannot have changed, but must be much as they were; and therefore, in basing this paper upon my personal experiences, I fancy it will be up to date and will fully accord with the experiences of to-day. But what will affect sport most disastrously, and reduce it for many years to come in many localities to a minimum, if it does not exterminate it altogether, is this terrible dearth and famine that is now devastating the country. Severe as is its effect upon the starving

natives, do not let us entirely forget in their misery the horrible privations that the brute creation must be now suffering, deprived of food, and having to travel immense distances for water. Entire districts will be denuded of animal life, whilst the neighbourhood of streams and gheels will receive an undue proportion, where they will mutually destroy one another and be destroyed.

THE SAMBER

I dread to hear what, in this respect, has been the result of the Indian famine.

It is needless for me to recommend sport, in the various phases it assumes, as the absolute duty of every Griffin; for it is bred in the bone, and it is surprising how the most prosaic subaltern, who perhaps at home may have never enjoyed the

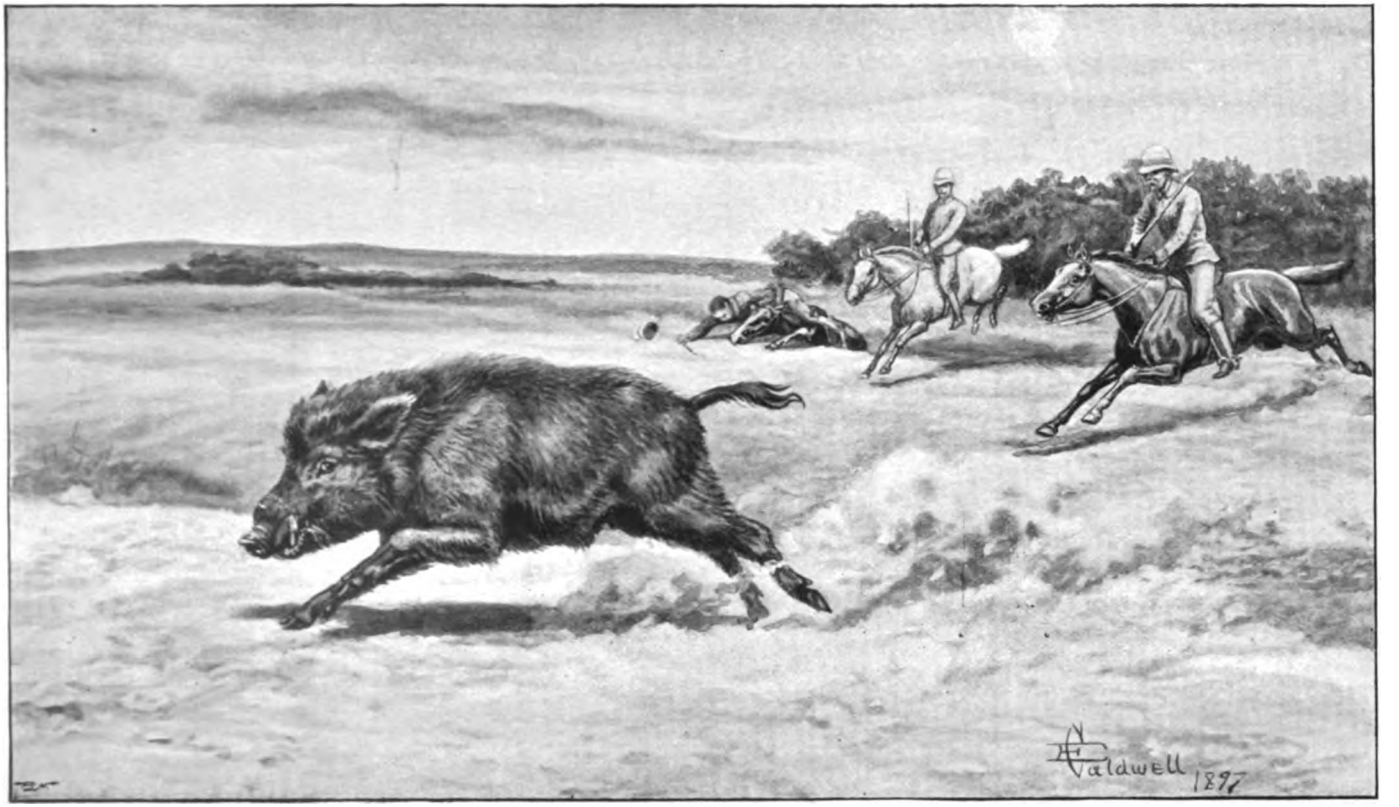
opportunity, will develop into an enthusiastic first-rate sportsman as soon as he finds himself in the position to engage in it. India is *par excellence* the land of the poor sportsman, for not only does the pay go further than at home, but sport is more generally obtainable and at less cost. Stations vary, but as a rule quail or partridge shooting costs nothing beyond the cartridges; deer and similar game can be obtained at a short distance. Pig-sticking and big game shooting of course require more elaborate arrangements and are more expensive, especially in view of the blank days, which run up the cost.

Those blank days! Is it to prevent life from being too enjoyable, or is it to render our appreciation of red-letter days all the keener, that we are all obliged to experience constant disappointment in every sport? Who does not recollect that first right and left at the end of the covert in full view of the other guns, with the Squire's cheery shout, 'Well done, my boy!' or that 20-lb. salmon, hooked, played, and gaffed without assistance, our record fish up to that date, or that glorious burst in the best run of the season, when, more by good luck than by good management, and helped by a light weight, we managed to get well away and to retain our place in front to the finish? It is the seldom recurrence to all but specially favoured mortals of these really memorable events that constitutes their charm, and preserves them, as we increase in age, green and fragrant, a constant source of pleasurable recollection, when blank days and other trials and disappointments are forgotten. It is for this that I feel constantly thankful for my Indian sporting experiences, days unhappily never to return, but affording in my present more prosaic existence a never-failing delightful memory. It is for this, if for no other purpose, that I would exhort every young subaltern who has the opportunity to lay up for himself a store of such recollections whilst his sporting proclivities are strongest and his energies and bodily powers at their best.

I lay special emphasis on the word 'subaltern,' because I believe that, like 'poor Jack,' there must be a good cherub aloft looking after him in the almost daily risks he runs from his rashness and inexperience. If his anxious father or his fond doting mother could only see their precious boy riding that partially broken Waler at his first steeplechase, or recklessly rushing in at polo on his overweighted pony, or wading up to his middle in a tropical sun after duck and snipe, or standing on the ground to receive that tiger or bear shortly to be driven towards him, or that race for first spear over broken and treacherous ground, his eyes

only on the cunning and crafty animal before him, watching his every twist and turn, and leaving to his trusty Arab the duty of picking his way—if, I say, his parents could only see their son in the keen enjoyment of any one of these situations, a man in every sense, learning self-reliance, steadiness of nerve, with quickness of hand and eye, they might be fearful whether he would be one of the very small percentage who annually come to grief, but they could scarcely fail to be proud of him as a typical Englishman, practising the pursuits that best develop the qualities necessary to fit him for his duties wherever he may be called, and rendering him fearless in their strict performance. It is because India offers such grand facilities that it makes such an exceptional training ground.

It will not be possible for me to follow our Griffin into every variety of sport. Although India is the poor man's paradise, where the influence of the pocket is not the all-important factor it is in most other places, still sport must be generally worked for, as the better it is the more competition is there regarding it. It is not every one who goes in for big game shooting or for high-class racing. Like other pursuits in life, it is useless to attempt these, the blue ribbons of Indian sport, without intending to enter into them thoroughly; but to the least sporting of individuals may come the opportunity of winning small Gymkhana station races or a shot at big game, and many a man who went out to shoot snipe or quail has returned the proud possessor of a tiger's skin. I recollect two such instances, and, curiously enough, in both the lucky men were surgeons. The first case occurred when part of my battalion was on the march from Deesa to Mount Aboo. I was not with it, but I heard that news was brought into camp of a tiger in the neighbourhood, and that every one who could turned out, armed with Snider rifles and miscellaneous weapons of every description. They were all Griffins, and had never yet seen a tiger outside a cage. The animal was beaten out with considerable noise, almost mobbed, when it seemed suddenly to disappear. There was no proper shikari with the party, which broke up, and wandered about in the endeavour to solve the problem. Eventually a native caught a glimpse of an animal's eye in the thick foliage of a small tree; the surgeon, who happened to be at hand, made out the creature, thoroughly cowed and crouching on the lowest limb, and brought it down with a Snider bullet. It turned out to be a young lioness, very far away from her usual haunts; for lions are not often heard of at such a distance from the desert country.



OR THAT RACE FOR FIRST SPEAR

In the second instance, the officer was taking a walk before breakfast, armed with a single 16-bore rifle, in the hope of meeting pea-fowl. On cautiously approaching the edge of a dry nullah, he heard a light rustle among the leaves which might have been caused by one of these birds; but, on turning towards the noise, he saw a tigress disappearing through the bushes as she mounted the opposite bank. To fire his single barrel and then to bolt towards camp was the work of a moment, but when he returned, better armed and accompanied by beaters, he found that the small bullet had done its work, and that the animal, shot through the heart, was lying exactly where he had fired at it.

An amusing occurrence happened to a senior officer of my battalion, who did not profess to be a sportsman, or, in fact, to use a gun. He had once been persuaded to form one of a party to shoot jungle-fowl, which run through the thick jungle like red-legs, and are therefore most difficult to see and shoot, so that several guns are generally desirable. During the beat two tigers appeared together before the astonished Major, who was exhorted by his native attendant to fire; but, to the immense disgust of the latter, he quietly put up his gun, saying in his best Hindustani, 'You don't take me for a bloomin' idiot, do you?' or words to that effect. The animals of course made off, and were not again found, and very angry were the other sportsmen that a chance which so seldom occurs, of a right and left at tigers, should have been offered to the only one of the party who would not avail himself of it. To justify the Major—who was a capital officer, with any amount of pluck—I may add that, as he was no sportsman, I very much doubt if he carried ball cartridge for eventualities, as the others did, and he could scarcely have been expected by the greatest Griffin out, even with the laudable object of affording promotion, to tickle up the tigers with No. 6 shot.

Before I relate a few of my personal experiences of griffinhood, as typical examples of the rashness of embryo sportsmen, let me offer one recommendation about weapons. I shall not attempt to mention any particular gun or rifle. Those now in use may be superior to what were thought the best a quarter of a century ago; but certainly then, as now, the necessity to sporting rifles of a flat trajectory within sporting distances was recognised as an essential. My battery consisted of a double 12-bore rifle, an Express for deer, with a pair of 12-bore unchoked shotguns, and I much doubt if this could now be improved upon. However, the suggestion I wished to make—one which is, I think,

of the utmost importance for big game sportsmen—is, that the stocks of all the weapons used should be of uniform pattern as regards bend, length, and cast-off. I am not aware if this has ever been before proposed, and whether I am liable to the charge of plagiarism, but with me the idea is original. In these days of try-guns, there should be no difficulty in obtaining a stock to suit, and that found to fit the shotgun should be used for the rifle.

The reason is obvious. It is but seldom that a standing shot is obtained at driven game. The animal is usually in motion, and more often than not going at a smart pace, for which an allowance when firing must be made. With a snaphot the fits of the stock is everything, enabling the rifle automatically to cover the mark; and although when an animal is clearly seen or is stationary more precision in aiming is desirable, there are often instances when there is no time to aim, or when in the dark it may not be possible to do so, and in these cases a well-fitting stock will often enable one to bag game that would otherwise have been clean missed or perhaps would have got away wounded. Let me simply instance the case of a charging tiger, where there may be only time to throw up the rifle and fire, or where the state of the nerves may interfere with a careful aim. How many lives have been sacrificed in such a case to the long straight stock with which so many rifles are fitted, causing a snapshot to be low and therefore misplaced? Quite recently I was seal shooting from a boat with such a rifle. A seal we were chasing suddenly appeared some twenty yards away, offering a snapshot. I threw up the rifle and fired, the bullet striking the water some eight or ten inches below him, the result entirely of the long stock.

Very shortly after our arrival in India, the following amusing occurrence happened to some of our sporting non-commissioned officers. A party of them had been granted a shooting pass on brigade holiday, and the return of one individual minus his thumb necessitated a court of inquiry, at which it transpired in evidence that of the four who went out, one was 'told off' to shoot the tigers, and carried his military rifle. Another was intended to shoot deer, and carried a gun with ball cartridge. The third was to reserve himself for duck and snipe for some extraordinary reason; whilst the victim of the accident was supposed to shoot anything that came in his way; and as there were more doves about than anything else, he naturally did most of the firing. When the paper he had provided for wadding was expended, he took to camels' droppings, of which there was a bountiful supply

on the sandy plain, and the round pellets clogged when rammed down, thus doubtless causing the explosion. This was an experience of griffinhood with 'bazaar' guns; but our men afterwards became excellent sportsmen, and on a brigade holiday it was little use visiting a swamp within twenty miles of the camp, for Tommy Atkins would invariably be there at daybreak, having started at midnight or earlier to walk out. Our sergeant-major, one of the best rifle shots in the battalion, was a keen sportsman, and bagged a tiger with his military rifle close to Deesa.

For big game shooting, the services of a good shikari are essential, and, as in similar cases elsewhere, good treatment and liberal payment are the best incentives to success. I cannot impress upon the Griffin too strongly that, in spite of a dark skin, human nature is the same in India as it is in other countries, and I find it hard to limit my admiration for the sterling, plucky natives I have met, whose equals in their own special qualities it would not always be easy to find among more civilised nations. Treat them kindly and considerately, and you will rarely have cause to complain; your sport depends upon them, and whilst they often incur great hardships and risks to show it to you, it may so happen that your own life may come to depend upon their staunchness. The best plan is for the shikari to receive a small monthly payment, with a bonus for each animal bagged, provided the sahib shoots it. Never permit your shikari or a native to shoot; for, post him as you like, an animal in his endeavours to avoid the Griffin he has seen, heard, or smelt is apt to give the silent native the shot, and it is most mortifying thus to lose the sport. I would far sooner the animal got clear away. This only happened to me once, very shortly after my arrival in India, and I at once adopted the rule of withholding the reward unless I personally bagged the game. In this way I enlisted the best exertions of my shikari and of the beaters, and made them realise that it was the sport, and not the dead animal only, I wished for.

A capital story of griffinhood used to be told in the 27th Inniskillings, when I knew that excellent battalion. Two young and newly arrived subalterns went out to shoot duck in a large gheel where the rushes and other aquatic plants grew profusely. Each sportsman used a small native boat propelled by one man, who, probably to faciliate taking to the water, either involuntarily or for retrieving purposes, wore nothing whatever but a small loin cloth. The duck soon began to rise, and the shooting amidst the rushes became fast and furious, when the shot from one discharge happened to reach the other boat, causing the

native to throw down his paddle and to yell with agony, as he rubbed his bare skin that smarted severely although not broken. The gross indignity of having one's personal attendant thus suddenly assailed and disabled was too much for the equanimity of his master, who shouted out, 'What the deuce do you mean by shooting my man?' and at once put up his own gun to inflict upon his neighbour equivalent retaliation. It was the turn this time of the other boatman to roll on the bottom of his boat, bewailing his death at the hands of the sahib and calling down curses upon the latter's posterity. Intense indignation filled the first sportsman's breast at this deliberate offensive return, upon his innocent and unsuspicious boatman, for what was in his own case but an unfortunate accident; so, not to be behindhand in

RETALIATION

the administration of this rough and ready justice, he let fly with his left barrel, again extorting from his friend's boatman an agonised shriek. This fire was promptly returned with a similar result, and honour having been satisfied by the discharge of a full broadside—for it was before the days of breechloaders—they amicably came together to compare damages and to drink a friendly glass, before resuming operations against the duck.

Let me now relate my first attempt to interview a tiger. I was, of course, most keen to effect the introduction, but my sporting knowledge and my equipment were by no means commensurate with my eagerness, and it amuses me now to think what a thorough Griffin I was. I had been ordered to Mount Aboo within a month or so of my arrival in India, and I

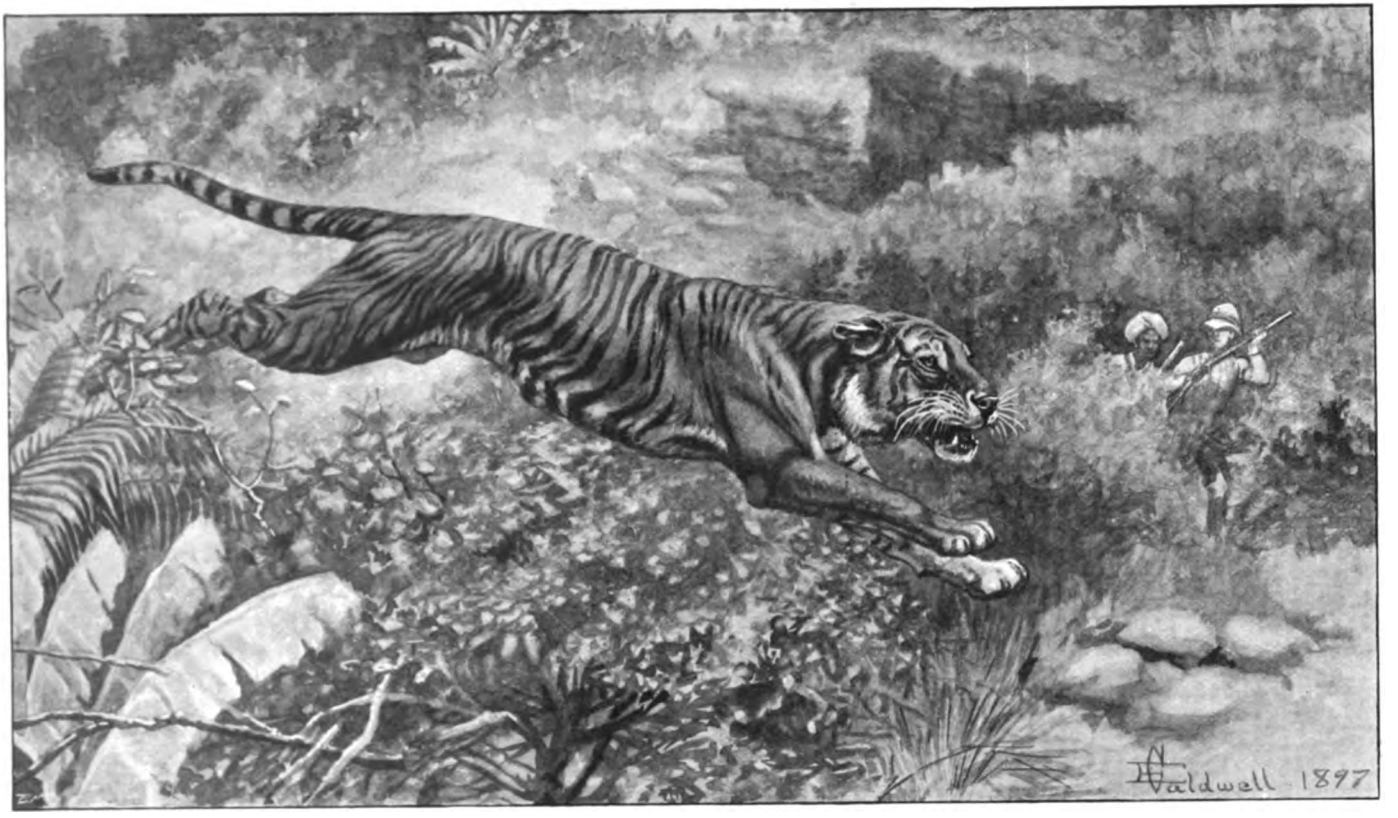
at once let it be known in the neighbourhood that I would give twenty rupees for every tiger I shot. Accordingly, on returning one evening to my tent, after a long day's cricket, in just sufficient time to dress for dinner, I found two natives, who had been patiently waiting for hours, ready to conduct me to a 'kill' some miles away; and they explained that, as the moon was favourable, I should probably be able to bag the tiger by sitting in a tree over the deceased bullock. The men were only ordinary villagers, but I at once acquiesced in their proposal as if they had been trained shikaries, and proceeded to make arrangements by getting something to eat and changing my clothes. I had only a 12-bore gun with some ball cartridges, but I strapped round me my military revolver, as well, I believe, as a large hunting-knife, and, encumbered with extra wraps for the night, set forth. It was now late, and the distance proved to be further than I anticipated, so that by the time we approached the 'kill' it was perfectly dark, the moon not having risen. The natives pointed out, more by signs than by speaking, a single large tree, which, surrounded by dense scrub jungle, could just be made out looming before us. It was under this tree that the 'kill' lay, and we at once proceeded in Indian file, one native leading and the other behind me, to creep towards it as quietly as we could. I soon made out distinctly the sound of some animal tearing at the carcase, and the leading native, whispering the one word 'bagh,' or tiger, began to push his way through the thick bushes towards it.

I must say I thought it a most risky proceeding to interrupt so rudely in absolute darkness the royal repast; but as the villagers showed no hesitation whatever, I determined that I would not be the one to do so, and therefore we continued forward, able just to distinguish the large tree in front, low growls or snarls being audible from below it. As we emerged into a small open space where the dead bullock lay, we heard a heavy animal jump into the jungle on the opposite side, growling as he went. I was immediately assisted on to one branch of the tree, one of the natives sitting on another, whilst the second native returned to his village, which was not far off, and there we sat for several hours, vainly expecting the tiger to return to finish his meal. The whole proceeding was, in a sporting sense, most ludicrous, for the villagers ought certainly to have known that a tiger, thus disturbed, would never return; and I have often since thought that either the animal was a hyæna, which I do not believe was the case, or that the absolute indifference to danger showed by the men was a curious example of the native contempt I have

often heard of, begotten of familiarity with tigers from childhood. About midnight I thought it time to end the farce, so, firing off my revolver to scare away possible intruders, we descended the tree and made our way back to camp.

My next attempt was more fortunate. I had by this time engaged a shikari, sharing his expenses with a brother-officer, as great a Griffin as I was, and under his guidance we had already had some excellent sport with the hill samber. My equipment still only consisted of one 12-bore gun, whilst my companion had, in addition to a 14-bore gun, an old single-barrel rifle which had either burst at the muzzle or had been designedly cut down, but which was, in consequence of being shortened, absolutely inaccurate. On this occasion we were just concluding tiffin when our shikari was announced. He had come in with the news that there had been a 'kill' only a few miles away, and he proposed to take us there before dark to sit over the carcase. I encumbered myself again with my revolver and with perfectly unnecessary clothes, but we arrived with ample time to spare, and were met by natives who had been posted in trees to watch the ground; they reported that they had seen the tiger go towards the dead bullock, and that he was now engaged devouring it. Accordingly it was decided at once to attempt a beat. My companion was posted about two hundred yards to my right, and we were both on the top of a steep slope that well commanded the ground in front and offered a very secure position. The natives from the neighbouring village, who had been collected in expectation that we should require their services, were sent by a détour to form a line beyond the 'kill,' in order to beat up toward us, the shikari accompanying them.

Almost as soon as the shouting and tom-toms started I detected the tiger creeping through the bushes directly towards me, and had the native with me only kept silent I might have had a close shot; but his volubility in pointing the beast out at once caused our detection. The animal stopped about one hundred and twenty yards away, looking at us and growling, his hind quarters covered by a bush, and only his chest and one shoulder exposed. The distance was too great for a smooth-bore gun, and the target was very small; but I went down on one knee in orthodox military fashion, and, after a careful aim, fired. Away bounded the tiger to the right, untouched, taking the bushes in his stride like a greyhound, a most beautiful and marvellous sight. I wish I had measured some of his bounds. The bushes were as tall and taller than I was, and he simply cleared them



TAKING THE BUSHES IN HIS STRIDE

without any apparent exertion. I gave him the left barrel at considerable elevation, and then, reloading as I went, set off to run after him, with what object it would be difficult now for me to explain. As I ran I heard a shot, followed by two more, and upon coming into an open clearing, I found my companion sitting on the dead tiger. It seemed that as soon as he saw the animal coming in his direction, but too far away to offer an easy shot, he ran to head him as if he had had a rabbit to deal with, and just as he arrived breathless and perspiring at the open clearing, the tiger with one of his immense bounds landed in it over a bush. A snapshot with the erratic single rifle resulted in the animal being struck above the eye, the bullet glancing off without penetrating, and merely removing half an inch of skin. It, however, stunned the tiger, and before he could recover himself my companion gave him both barrels of his gun. The joke between us was that, as my companion had left his cartridges behind when he started to run, he would have been obliged to ask me to complete the operation of finishing off his tiger unless he had managed it with his gun. Verily, we were two thorough Griffins, and hardly deserved to come so well out of the adventure. The tiger, with his feet tied together, was slung on a pole; we arrived at the mess tent in the middle of dinner, and placed him in triumph on the ground near the head of the table, amidst the envy of the officers and the admiration of the men, who flocked from their tents to see the first tiger that had been bagged in the battalion. It is needless to say that we were both confirmed big-game shots from this moment, and I at once wrote home for a heavy rifle, which arrived before the beginning of the next hot season. By this time I had mastered the rudiments of the language, and may be said to have emerged to a great extent from the period of griffinhood.

I have no space here to dilate upon the delights of life in India under canvas, far from the haunts of civilisation, an open-air existence occupied entirely with sport, and in which each day affords a new experience. I arranged during the ensuing hot weather for such a trip with another subaltern, and at the end of our two months the bag consisted of one tiger, four bears, five panthers, together with several samber, cheetal, and little chinkara or ravine deer, as well as small game. I propose to relate the circumstances connected with the tiger, because there was a well-marked exhibition of griffinhood about them that entitles them to record in this paper. Our custom was to change our camping ground entirely upon the reports of big game that were received

from natives despatched for the purpose. One day we were upon the point of striking camp, and nearly everything was packed, when 'khubba' was brought in of a particularly large tiger upon whose account we had really come to that neighbourhood, but which had disappeared upon our arrival, only now to reappear just as we were leaving. It seemed that he had taken up his quarters in a well-known cave quite close to our camp; so we decided to devote the morning to him, moving in the afternoon to our new ground as already arranged. On arriving at the cave, we found that there were two front entrances—one, the larger and more important, being evidently the front door of the establishment, whilst the other was merely a sort of crevice in the rock, very much of a back door. From this latter exit, however, there was a regular well-trodden path that looked as if it was often used.

We tossed for choice of places. My companion won and selected the principal entrance, from which the ground sloped downwards towards the smaller; consequently he was more favourably placed than I was, and could better see and command the whole of the ground between us and the cave. This ground was fairly open, but there were bushes and long grass upon it, with large trees at intervals, preventing a clear view. My shikari wished me to sit on the top of a huge boulder of rock, undoubtedly the proper place because of the security it afforded; but on going there, I found that I could only see from it a portion of the ground, that near the stone being hid by its curvature and by the vegetation that grew upon it. For this reason, and also because I was exposed on the top of the rock to my companion's fire, of which I was far more afraid than I was of the tiger, I decided to stand on the ground under the shelter of the boulder, where I should be about four yards from the path I mentioned. A palm tree grew here, and I took my post behind it, rifle in hand, my shikari holding my gun, a second gun being in charge of another native behind him. I was trying for the first time a percussion shell that had been sent out with my new rifle—a most pernicious invention, let me remark—and my intention was to put the shell in the right barrel and a solid ball into the left.

The beat began, an infernal din of tom-toms, crackers, and shouting, smoke balls being thrown into the cave to assist its occupant in making up his mind to evacuate. The tiger was an old hand, and probably knew what it all meant; so he first tried to break back through the beaters, the increased noise they set up plainly indicating what had occurred. Not liking the look of

affairs in this direction, he re-entered the cave, and in another moment I saw him issue from the crevice and come at a steady trot down the pathway directly towards me, his eyes on the ground and his fat cheeks wobbling as he trotted. He was an immense brute, the largest I have ever seen, with enormous shoulders and powerful limbs, and a big head with a good deal of hair about the ears. As soon as he appeared, I covered him with my rifle, intending, in accordance with the instructions that had been given me by experienced sportsmen, to shoot him as he passed me. The theory is that a wounded tiger generally goes straight ahead, and that if shot when approaching, he is far more apt to charge than if allowed first to pass, because in the latter case he would have to turn from his course to come at you.

LIFTING ONE PAW FROM THE GROUND LIKE A POINTER

Acting upon this advice, I proposed to delay firing until he was abreast of me on the path; but it was not to be; for my companion, catching a glimpse of the striped jacket through the grass, very unjustifiably, for he knew I was posted thereabouts, fired across me, and I heard his bullet go ping as it struck the ground and went ricocheting away into space. The tiger stopped abruptly, a noble sight. Lifting one paw from the ground like a pointer, and turning towards the place from which the shot had been fired, he showed his teeth and growled softly to himself. It flashed upon me that it was now or never, for if he turned his head and saw me, he would have been upon me with one bound, so I gave him the right barrel through the chest. He rolled over. I gave him the left behind the shoulder, and, taking the gun from my shikari, finished him off by a shot through the head.

I found that providentially I had mistaken the cartridges, putting the solid ball into the right barrel and the shell into the left. The former had made a fearful wound through the entire body, whilst the latter had only burst outside, blowing away a piece of skin the size of my hand, but inflicting no real injury. Perhaps the action of the shell might have been better on the flesh of the chest than on the rib bones behind the shoulder; but I was thankful for the escape, and after one more very similar experience, which I will relate, I gave up percussion shells and used solid balls only. I paced the distance the tiger was from me when I fired, and found it to be seven yards.

When all was over, I found the native to whom I had entrusted my second gun at the top of the palm tree. I neither saw nor heard him climb up it, but as he had neglected his duty and might have cost us our lives in attracting the tiger's attention, I administered a gentle castigation as a slight corrective, with the full approbation of my shikari, first explaining to him the enormity of his offence. It is curious that the tiger never saw us. The creatures' habits being to a great extent nocturnal, their eyes are doubtless not adapted to the strong glare of the midday sun, whilst it is possible that the sudden awakening and the involuntary forced exit from a dark cave proved as dazzling to him as I am sure it would have been to me under similar circumstances. My shikari, I think, deserves great credit for his staunchness, handing my gun when required, and never attempting to fire himself, although he knew I was a Griffin and had never before shot a tiger.

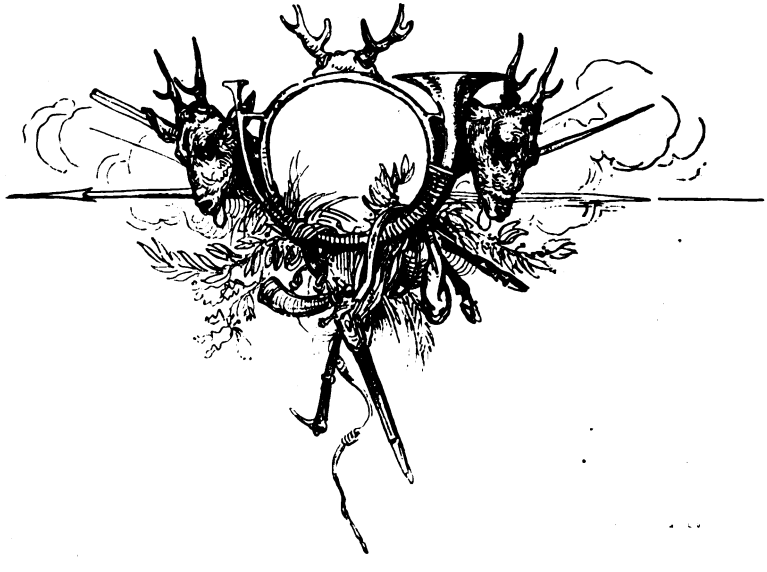
The animal measured 10 feet 6 inches from tip of nose to tip of tail, but as the tail was short and thick, the body was unduly large. We skinned him on the spot, in the midst of a tropical storm which had been threatening all the morning, and which made us decide to remain that night where we were, without unpacking anything. There were two ill effects from this heavy rain. The skin became so saturated as to defy all efforts to cure it, and it eventually rotted away, whilst the white ants, the most insidious of Indian pests, ate through the bottom of my wooden tub, quite an inch thick, simply honeycombing it in the night, and destroying the mosquito net which was packed at the bottom.

Let me conclude by relating another incident to exemplify the untrustworthiness of percussion shells. One evening my shikari proposed that, as there was no other sport on hand, I might sit over a small pool of water within half a mile of my tent, which, he said, was frequented by a bear. I accordingly had an early

meal, and took my post behind a temporary screen of bushes before sunset. As soon as it began to grow dark the bear came on the farther side of the water, next the thick jungle, and, before drinking, sat upright for some purpose, his back being towards me. I had placed a percussion shell in the right barrel and a bullet in the left, and I aimed about the centre of the back, as near the level of the shoulder as I could estimate. Directly I fired I heard the thud of the hit, with the noise of the explosion, and the poor brute rolled upon the ground in agony, roaring and shrieking in such a manner that the servants in camp thought he must have had hold of me. My shikari said, 'Maro, sahib, maro' ('Fire, sir, fire'); but in my griffinhood, and feeling, I must say, the greatest compassion for the unhappy animal, I very mistakenly said 'No, he is dead,' and refrained from giving him the second barrel, until the bear, probably hearing our voices, picked himself up and proceeded to move away. I at once realised my mistake in having thought the bear a disabled and dying animal, due to my inexperience, and took a snapshot; but I evidently missed, for he disappeared into the darkness.

There was nothing for it but to remain where I was and wait for daybreak. I am sure now that I should have done better had I returned to camp, but I was young and keen, and decided to remain. At the first streak of dawn I was up, expecting to find the bear close to, as he would no doubt have been had the shell burst after penetration. The ground where he had rolled was saturated with blood, and the trail was well marked at first and easily followed; but as we went on, the marks became less and less, the thick hair no doubt absorbing the blood, which congealed and hardened. The skill of my shikari in following the track was wonderful. A speck of blood on a leaf or on a stalk of grass, the scratch of a nail on the ground, the displacement of a stone or of a twig, or the bending of a plant or bush, were sufficient, and we hardly delayed a moment over the barest rock. Whenever he was at fault he took a cast forward, and generally at once hit on some indication to show which way the animal had passed. We followed the poor brute over one big hill, down into the opposite valley, and to the top of another hill. At one spot we again found the ground saturated with blood, where he had been scratching in a dried-up pool in a vain attempt to obtain some water. At last we came on wet blood and other fresh indications, and my shikari warned me to be prepared, for he could not be far off; and at the moment we were cautiously advancing, expecting to meet him, we traced the trail into a large cave, the fresh blood

on its side showing that he could only have entered when he heard us coming. I never bagged that bear; and although I soon subsequently discovered that noise is customary with them when wounded, still I have never quite recovered the remorse I suffered at witnessing the agony of that animal, and to me it is now a painful reminiscence. It was past two o'clock when I returned to camp and broke my fast.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

'OUIDA' writes to me as follows:—'In your "Notes" for this month you contradict certain statements of mine concerning the conditions of English sport. I shall be obliged to you to print the following reply. In "The Massarenes" there are many direct attacks against sports. I do not think any are unjustified by fact. The thousands and tens of thousands of heads of game slaughtered in the shooting-season are for the most part sent (*i.e.* sold) to the markets. If a visitor does not kill his due quota of game at these "big shoots" he is despised by his host and his fellow-guests. If you know anything of battue-shooting you must be aware that the majority of the pheasants shot *are* "tame home-fed birds"—birds reared solely for the purpose of being shot; about such birds there is nothing wild whatever; to their last day they crowd round the keeper to be fed. In one well-known estate in England, where the great extent of the coverts and height of the trees favour the flight of the birds, wooden stands are erected in the drives, from which elevated position the gunners can hit the pheasants more securely. It is not I who invent the enormous numbers of winged creatures slaughtered in one of your shooting-seasons; they are proudly put on record, and cannot be either exaggerated or denied. There is not a single honourable or even respectable feeling which moves the battue-shooter of the present day; his only motive is an ignoble envy to make bigger bags than his neighbours. It is slaughter for the mere gratification of a paltry vanity. This so-called "sport" does unquestionably lead to the destruction of all wild life indigenous to the woods and fields. Let any one who will visit a keeper's lodge, or read a keeper's books, and deny, if he can, afterwards that all the birds of field and forest, stream and pasture, moor and hill, are being

exterminated for the sake of artificially preserving the game. Domestic animals, if they get out in the parks, are trapped or shot to the same end. A friend of mine, whose son possesses very large shootings, is obliged to walk in her own park with her little dog in a leash, lest he should disturb the game by his gambols!'

'Everything is sacrificed in England to an unnatural slaughter artificially sustained, provided for, and fostered. This is not a matter of conjecture, nor of what is called sentiment; it is a matter of fact. As regards your quotations from Hurstmonceaux's speech in "The Massarenes," it was not necessarily summer because he was sketching; some persons are so odd that they prefer sketching to shooting even in winter. I have not a copy of my book at hand where I am writing this, but I think it is stated that it was the last day of the hunting-season when Hurstmonceaux saw the fox. Does the huntsman invariably verify the sex of a fox when the hounds have given tongue? About the cubs I may be wrong, but I think I have seen them before the trees were in leaf in Northern woods. Very small things, just born. It is perfectly possible for a man to lead the life of a country gentleman, and yet renounce all sport. I know one, at least, who has done so, and who is not the less respected in his country, although he makes his reformed opinions very forcibly heard. It is time, I think, that it should be recognised that people are not necessarily prigs, fools, or women, because they view with disapprobation, even with disgust, the mania for slaughter, as introduced into Great Britain by Prince Albert, and patronised by his sons and grandsons. It is time, I think, that even the fanatics of sport should recognise that there is about it nothing admirable, manly, or deserving of praise, and that when men of rank make it the be-all and end-all of their existence, they cannot wonder if others may consider that such existences are of slight value, if they are not injurious and contemptible. I regret to be obliged to admit that in our immediate day women are as guilty in this respect as their male relatives and friends. The "crack shot" of the "big shoot" is not seldom nowadays a woman, by courtesy deemed gentle.'

Of course I fulfil 'Ouida's' request to publish her reply; but the majority of my readers are acquainted with the subjects she

criticises and are aware how hopelessly wrong she is. Owing to the kindness of some extremely good friends, if I do not now 'know anything of' what 'Ouida' calls 'battue-shooting,' I must have neglected my chances year after year for a long time past. I have certainly fired a good many cartridges annually; in fact I do know something of shooting—the word 'battue' I scarcely remember to have *heard*, often as one reads it. Perhaps the most utterly preposterous idea in 'Ouida's' criticism is that about the 'wooden stands,' on the one well-known estate, to the top of which men are supposed to climb to 'hit the pheasants more securely.' 'Ouida' will be surprised to learn that the great object of a host or manager of a shoot is to get the pheasants to fly as high as possible. Nobody wants to blow to pieces birds that blunder out of a cover half a dozen yards from the muzzle of his gun. The higher the better, so long as the birds are in shot, is the ideal of the good sportsman; and if 'Ouida' is not misinformed as to the stands on the well-known estate, she would doubtless learn that they are put up because the pheasants fly from exceptionally placed covers at such a height that it is absolutely impossible to reach them from the ground. But her authority for the stands may not improbably be incorrect. I have certainly never heard of such a thing.

That tens of thousands of head of game are shot annually is of course a fact, but that the pheasant which is clean shot suffers more than the fowl which has her neck wrung I do not believe—or that either can really be said to suffer at all. Some birds are unfortunately wounded, it is true, but 'Ouida' would be surprised again to find how carefully such birds are sought for in order that they may not linger in pain. In many cases the game is sold. Why not? Why should not the owner of an estate recover a part of the money it costs him to provide sport for his friends? Some men do not sell. At one place where I have shot for several years past—a place where 2,000 head a day has been very nearly approached when I have been out (and though I cannot at the moment obtain figures, probably on occasions exceeded)—my host for a long time never sold a bird. He copiously supplied his friends, his old regiment, various hospitals, and all the cottagers within reach; but these latter, who accounted for a large proportion of the kill, very frequently did not know what to do with pheasants and partridges. Much game was wasted, and

what used to go to them is now sold to form a fund which is entirely devoted to their wants. Has it ever occurred to 'Ouida' how many thousands of brace of birds are given away every season to those to whom the gift is really a boon? Has she ever thought of the multitudes of men who gain livelihoods in connection with shooting—keepers, attendants, beaters, and then again the hosts employed in making guns, cartridges, and shooting appliances? In one day's covert shooting last season somebody at lunch time calculated that we were utilising the services of over fifty men and nine horses.

Much nonsense is talked about 'tame' pheasants. The wildness cannot be eradicated from the bird, and the so-called 'tame' pheasant flies just as high, as fast, and as strongly as his wild brother. I am afraid I must also stigmatise as nonsense the assertion that the 'visitor' who 'does not kill his due quota of game at these big shoots is despised.' For one thing, even with the system of changing places after each beat now generally in vogue, one man may have persistently bad luck all day in the way of chances, and another man may constantly happen to be at good stands where he gets an exceptional lot of shooting. A slight feeling of contempt may be felt for a man who does not let the birds rise, who blows them to pieces, continually wounds without killing, or shoots in a manner dangerous to his companions or the beaters; but a very moderate shot may be a good sportsman. 'Ouida' does not seem to consider that the 'form' of the 'visitor' is, as a very general rule, well known, and a host would be an idiot to despise his guest for not doing what he was never expected to do. With regard to the lady who is obliged to walk in her own park with her little dog in a leash, an outrage which draws from 'Ouida' a note of exclamation, I can only say that if she is a woman of ordinary common-sense, with a dog that is not well enough trained to follow her and is given to running in the coverts, she very willingly accepts the obligation. I wonder, by the way, that 'Ouida' is not sympathetic about the poor little young birds who would be terrified by the 'gambols' of the little dog—presumably a poacher. To blame Prince Albert for the existing fashion of shooting is not less wide of the mark than the majority of 'Ouida's' other statements. It seems to me that the present system of shooting is mainly or entirely due to the invention of breechloaders. With two guns out and

an expert loader, a good shot can do what was utterly out of the question in the days of the percussion cap. One special point more and I have done. Shooting does *not* 'lead to the destruction of all wild life indigenous to the woods and fields.' If 'Ouida' would condescend to read the chapter headed 'Vermin' in the Badminton Library Shooting Volume, she would find an earnest plea put forward for the preservation of various birds and beasts that are often ignorantly charged with mischievous habits of which they are innocent. As for the woman 'crack-shot,' in a varied experience of shooting in all parts of the country I have never seen a woman fire a gun; but in this respect I agree with 'Ouida' that for various reasons shooting is not a desirable accomplishment for a woman.

There is not much to be said on the subject to which I generally devote space—racing. Galtee More did not increase his reputation by the way in which he won the St. Leger. He 'would have won' in a canter, we are told, if there had been any pace; but the reply to this is the question, Why was there none? Galtee More was regarded as the only stayer in the field; so why did he not make his own pace and 'wait in front'? Wood, his rider, is one of the very few jockeys who could safely be trusted to perform this operation. I shall believe in Galtee More's ability to win the Cesarewitch with 9 st. 3 lb. when I have seen him do it, but not before. I fancy that St. Cloud, St. Bris, and Soliman are all certain to beat him at the weights should they go to the post. The race for the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster said very little for the two-year-olds; but none of the most notable were engaged. Probably Cyllene is the best we have seen out so far, and next to him I should place Champ de Mars, Disraeli, and Longtown. The Middle Park Plate should be an interesting race. How hard it is to win *any* race is shown by the fact—I have not checked the calculation, but I derive my statement from a patient and careful investigator—that out of the hundreds of yearlings that were sold last year at Doncaster only *eight* have actually won. A lot of rubbish and some very good-looking and promising youngsters were offered in the Leger week, which is the usual condition of affairs. One sees such possibilities—such probabilities, indeed—in some of these handsome little creatures that the lover of the horse is apt to disregard prudence and percentages—the small percentage of winners among the lots that are sold.

A correspondent kindly sends me this case of a 'Queer Recovery' suggested by Lady Middleton's article in a recent number. 'My friend Major B——, who held a commission in the Indian Staff Corps, inherited a gold watch from his father which he greatly prized from its associations, it having accompanied his father through the terrible days of the Mutiny and among others on a most historic occasion. On leaving India for England, greatly to the owner's consternation and chagrin, the watch could nowhere be found, and after diligent search was given up for lost. Many years afterwards Major B—— happened to drop across an old friend in London who asked him to dine. On entering his friend's dressing-room the Major suddenly descried the lost treasure on the dressing-table. He immediately asked his host how he came by it. All his friend knew was that on his return home he found it in one of his trunks. On looking back the two friends recollected that at one time in India they occupied adjoining rooms; and the only apparent solution to them of the mystery was that some suddenly alarmed thief had hastily slipped the Major's watch into his friend's trunk, and that it had so eventually arrived in England unknown to either of them. Needless to say the watch was promptly restored to the original owner.'

Curious as this story is, I think that the experience of my friend Mr. Hedley Peek must have appeared even more remarkable. He was hunting with the Surrey staghounds. The scent was good, and for over three-quarters of an hour the hounds had been running well, when a sudden turn brought them round facing the hill country, which is the bane of sport in this part. A hedge separated the field from the open down, and when Mr. Peek landed on the other side he noticed that his watch-chain was broken. Feeling certain that, a few moments before, his watch (a valued gift) was safe, he dismounted and made a careful search, retracing his course for some distance; while doing this he for the moment let go the reins, and the hunter, only too glad of the opportunity, turned round and galloped after her companions. My friend, deprived of both horse and watch, after unsuccessfully continuing his search for some time, started off in the direction the hounds had taken. In about half an hour he recovered his hunter, but had long given up all hope of seeing the watch again, and not a little annoyed at this misfortune, not to

mention the loss of the run, he put up at the nearest inn. His surprise may be imagined when, on the saddle being removed, his watch, uninjured and still going, was found beneath it. The explanation, however, is comparatively simple. The watch must have been jerked out, and, while hanging from the chain, been caught in the gap under the pommel of the saddle at the moment when the rider bent forward for the jump; when the horse landed on the other side and Mr. Peek leant back to steady it, the force of the jar evidently broke the chain, leaving the watch behind, where it remained safely lodged, each movement of the horse working it still further under the saddle.

This has in every way been a Jubilee cricket year. On no occasion which I can recall has such intense excitement been witnessed at the Oval as when Surrey beat Lancashire and the cricket prophets foretold a Surrey championship. But fate willed it otherwise, and the misfortunes which first fell to the lot of the Northern county too soon awaited their victors at the Taunton ground. Once more the delicate balance having been reversed, Lancashire secured a well-merited triumph; while Essex, which at one time was a warm favourite, takes the third place on the list of honour. Not only has this been an eventful year for play, but it has also given us two most excellent works on cricket. The Jubilee book by Prince Ranjitsinhji is certainly a work that will delight any lover of the game. It has been published in three editions—at five guineas, at twenty-five shillings, and at six shillings. In each copy of the two large-paper editions are over one hundred full-page illustrations, which represent cricket experts in various attitudes of play, either bowling, batting, fielding, or wicket-keeping. So carefully have these subjects been selected that any one studying them can at least see what he ought to do, even if—alas, there is so much in that 'if'—he cannot go and do it. The illustrations are all taken from instantaneous photographs, and are not only admirably produced, but equally well printed. The work itself is well written and full of valuable information, but from the arrangement and the general method adopted the volume appears to be intended more for the use of experienced cricketers than for beginners. The small-paper edition is to all intents and purposes the same as those referred to, but unfortunately in this case the printing of the pictures is not by any means always successful.

A work on a much more modest scale, though in its way equally valuable, is the small sixpenny handbook called 'Cricket,' by my constant contributor Mr. W. J. Ford. This volume is also illustrated from instantaneous photographs, and includes contributions by Messrs. F. G. J. Ford, T. Richardson, and M. C. Kemp. The work contains in a condensed form well-nigh everything which a young cricketer requires, and not a little which might be of service to the expert, such as an excellent bibliography and lists of records, county grounds, county colours, &c. A cheap manual of this kind should be especially useful at the present time, when so many gentlemen are starting private cricket teams, necessarily often composed of, or at least supplemented by, village talent. The book is full of simple and clear instructions, evidently intended to warn beginners against those numerous variations of bad style and injudicious slogging in which our villagers too often indulge. Such play may be successful at home, but fails hopelessly when opposed even to schoolboys who understand the rudiments of fielding.

All lovers of hunting will be grieved to hear of the misfortune which has overtaken that sporting little pack, the West Carbery, co. Cork, of which the Master is Mr. Somerville, brother of the lady who has written two admirable stories for this magazine—readers of 'A Grand Filly' will not have forgotten it. Dumb rabies broke out in the kennels, and the pack had to be destroyed. Mr. Somerville took the greatest care to get the hounds together, and revived hunting in the district; but I shall best explain the purpose of this Note by quoting from Miss Somerville's letter. She writes: 'This will be an incalculable loss, for the district is a very poor one, and the hounds have been of real service to the farmers, besides having been the means of creating a thoroughly friendly feeling between all classes, such as had not existed for years. If you know the south-west of Ireland at all you will understand that money is very scarce there, and our only hope of getting another pack together is that some Masters of Hounds will help us by giving us any supernumerary hounds that they may be able to spare. I know this is a bad time of year for such begging; but it is our one chance, and of course we shall raise as much money as we can.' I am sure the matter will appeal to all good sportsmen, and if any M.F.H. who reads this will kindly help, all I need add is that Mr. Somerville's address is Drishane, Skibbereen, co. Cork.

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THE HANBY HALL FOX

BY G. H. JALLAND

'LOOK here, Hogin, Mr. Thornton writes to ask when he can come with his hounds. Let's see—we shoot Longwood on the twenty-first and there is nothing after that of very great importance. Supposing I tell him to come any time he chooses after Christmas; they can't do us much harm then. Now, what about a fox?' and Thomas Henry Burrell, Esq., J.P., eyed his head-keeper with what purported to be an amiable smile, but, owing to an unfortunate and chronic obliquity of vision, resulted in an expression that would have terrified a nervous stranger.

Not more prepossessing was his companion, whose beetle brows and unkempt beard suggested the brigand profession. However, his smile was unmistakable when, in answer to his master's statement and query, he replied: 'There's no fear of them having a blank day, squire; but, beg pardon, hadn't they better keep away till the New Year? You see prices are always up for a week or more after Christmas, and you could arrange another day in Bogsike; it was shot first, and there's a good show again by now.'

'Ah, just so. I forgot about the Christmas demand. Very well, I'll write to Mr. Thornton. But, look here, mind there is a fox when he *does* come!'

'They'll find sure enough, sir; but what do you say to having a couple to make certain? They are cheaper this year.'

'No, no; one is sufficient,' snapped the master, who, turning on his heel, abruptly terminated the interesting conversation, and hurried within the portals of his 'ancestral halls,' as he delighted to style the really charming country house known far and wide as Hanby Hall.

Ivy-clad, moss-grown, and antique the place truly was, yet the term 'ancestral' could scarcely be applied where Thomas Henry Burrell, Esq., J.P., was concerned. Briefly, the Turf had turned the last of the Hanbys out, and dissolved bones had installed the reign of the Burrells. Ten years had now passed since, to the universal regret of the country-side, the fine old place had been sold to the highest bidder. At first the newcomer attained a certain popularity amongst his neighbours; for, though unmistakably a *nouveau riche*, his hospitality in the way of entertainments and his generosity in the matter of subscriptions, coupled with unlimited invitations to his big shoots, made him looked on as 'not half a bad sort.' Then he cleared off the hunt debt and started a stable of hunters, buying principally from his new acquaintances, who naturally made some most advantageous deals, Mr. Burrell being profoundly ignorant of horseflesh, however much he knew about bones. His hunting did not last over two seasons; his underworked animals were always bucking him off, and his ignorance led him into perpetual rows with the huntsmen. Finally he gave it up altogether, and Tattersall disposed of his stud at ruinous prices (compared with the cost).

Shortly after this it began to be noticed that his entertainments were gradually growing less magnificent and more infrequent. His purse also by degrees appeared to be losing its pristine generosity. Accordingly his popularity began to wane. Then it was whispered about, 'He sells his game,' possibly by men who had been doing it all their lives; but that makes no difference. Truth to tell, by nature Mr. Burrell was far from being the generous and hospitable man he had seemed; but he was shrewd to a degree, and, being anxious to get into the county set, had gone to work in the most sensible and expeditious manner. However, habits acquired in early days, when he used to purchase rags and bones by the pound from hawkers and peddlers, were not to be shaken off, and though most anxious to retain his dearly bought position, the expense went very much against the grain.

At last, having been appointed a J.P., he regarded his position in the county as finally secured, began at once to cut down his expenses right and left, and to cast about as to how he could make some money out of his country life. With this end in

view he commenced to rear pheasants on a gigantic scale, and to strictly preserve the large woods and numerous covers in which the Hanby estate abounded. He discovered in Hogin, the present head-keeper, a man after his own heart, and between them thev had managed to make their total at the end of a season the best in the district. Finding he could make his shooting bring in so much pleasantly earned cash, he grew less inclined to harbour such

WERE ALWAYS BUCKING HIM OFF

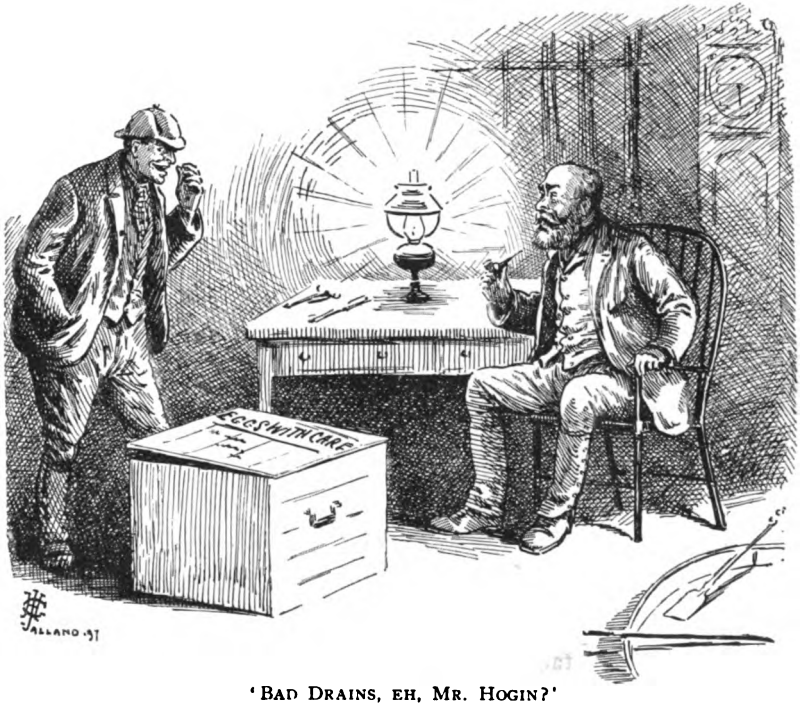
unprofitable lodgers as foxes, or to allow his preserves to be disturbed by hounds until the big days were over. Fortunately, Hanby lay on the outskirts of the hunt territory; but still it had been a favourite breeding place of foxes for generations, and the loss of the coverts during cubbing and the early part of the season was a serious blow to the Hopham Hunt. For two years past only very few fixtures had been made there, and it began to be noticed that run foxes rarely entered Hanby Woods. However, the fact remained that up to the present hounds had never failed to

find when permission had been obtained to enter Mr. Burrell's domain. Yet the Hanby foxes seemed to have degenerated sadly under the new *régime*, and they were usually ignominiously chopped in covert or pulled down after a short dusting through the woods. Accordingly, Mr. Burrell's reputation grew less and less savoury, and amongst hunting men he began to be looked upon with very grave suspicion. This was the state of things at the time my story opens, and from the conversation recorded we know whether or not the suspicions were justified. . . . The second day at Bogsike was over. Huge hampers, heavily laden, had been despatched to Leadenhall by night mail, and Mr. Thornton had fixed a day for the meet at Hanby.

Hogin received due notice, and on the preceding evening he might have been observed driving a pony-cart in the direction of Finley station, whence he returned after dark with a box labelled 'Eggs, with care.' A railway clerk who handed over the case had remarked: 'Some of your eggs must have got broken, but I don't suppose it matters, as they are certainly rotten ones,' his observation being quite justified by the strong aroma emanating from the securely nailed-down package. An expression of intense disgust overspread the classic features of the head-keeper when, in the privacy of his gun-room, he prised open a corner of the lid, and, candle in hand, cautiously peeped inside. But what did he see in that innocent-looking box to cause him such sudden alarm? Why should he seize the case labelled 'Eggs, with care,' and shake it so vigorously? and what on earth induced him to snatch up the poker, insert it through the opening, and dig viciously at the apparent emptiness? No answering rattle of eggshells broke the silence; no response of any sort. 'This comes of buying cheap 'uns!' he growled, and with many a muttered curse he filled his pipe and sat himself down by the fire to think.

An hour later he summoned to his presence Sam Spikin, better known as 'Slippery Sam,' an assistant-keeper, who had been engaged on the excellent principle of 'set a thief, &c.,' as he owned the reputation of being the smartest poacher in the district, and naturally he made a first-rate keeper; for he had a nodding acquaintance with almost every living thing on the estate, and could find his way blindfolded to any part of the preserves. Some six months had passed since this life of respectability had started, but already it began to pall on Sam. There was no fun in shooting rabbits when you were paid to do it, and, being of a generous nature himself, he was constantly at

loggerheads with Hogin and his master. But what dissatisfied him most was the departed sporting spirit of his native place. The cry of hounds was music to his ears, and a run on foot with the merry pack his greatest joy. No wonder he failed to be satisfied with the present stern rule at Hanby and its method of taking care of the vulpine species, when in the old days the squire 'kept a pack of dogs and hunted 'em hisself three days a week.' Wondering what Hogin could be wanting him for, he tapped at the gun-room door and entered. 'Hullo!' he exclaimed,



'Bad Drains, eh, Mr. Hogin?'

sniffing about like a questing hound. 'Bad drains, eh, Mr. Hogin? Reminds me of the scent of ——'

'Shut your mouth and listen to me,' the other interrupted with an oath.

'All right, guv'nor, keep your hair on,' retorted Sam, and seating himself on the table, he listened with many exclamations and a continuous grin to what his superior had to say.

'It's no part of my work,' he exclaimed, when the head-keeper had finished speaking, 'but'—and here he thought for a

minute—'make it worth my while, and I'm your man—say ten bob.'

At this his companion appeared to demur, but on Sam preparing to depart and exclaiming: 'All right then, do it yourself. If I go, I'll be ashamed of it to the end of my days. It's a dirty game anyway. Good-night!' Hogin seized the departing man's coat, and from his greasy purse carefully counted out the stipulated amount. Having pocketed the coins, Sam again assumed his position on the table, and with evident amusement watched Hogin, who proceeded to further open the lid of the newly arrived case, and inserting an arm, he brought forth a large wisp of most vilely smelling straw, which he carefully wrapped up in an old duster, making it secure with some stout twine, and leaving one end of the cord about twelve feet long, explaining as he cut it off, 'Give you room to chuck it over the hedges.' Then he went to a cupboard and selected a small bottle, which when uncorked filled the room with an overpowering odour of cough lozenges. Having well sprinkled the bundle with this mysterious fluid, he handed it to his grinning companion, remarking: 'Now, look here, Sam; mind and keep clear of our coverts. You had better run through the Park plantation and make straight for Tinderley—never mind how the wind is. Give 'em such a gallop as they've never had before; pick out all the big places and trappy fences you know of, and get to ground to finish with where they can't use a spade.'

'All right, guv'nor, you trust me! It'll be the queerest they've ever had, and, take my word for it, there'll be no digging either,' chuckled Sam, who tucked the bundle under his arm, and with a 'Good-night' disappeared into the darkness. After his subordinate had departed Hogin, well satisfied with himself and his cleverness, proceeded to refasten the odoriferous case, remarking, as he tacked on an address label: 'I'll make that cockney scamp return my postal order, anyhow.' Then, having locked up the gun-room, he wended his way to his cottage and well-earned supper.

Punctual to the minute, hounds drew up in the quaint and imposing courtyard of Hanby Hall on the appointed day. The gathering, however, was but a small one, owing no doubt to the fact that the Hanby days were in no great favour, and possibly in some measure to the knowledge that the swagger breakfasts which used to be the rule during Mr. Burrell's hunting period had dwindled down to sherry and sandwiches. But several local notabilities were present, amongst whom our host fussed,

explaining with many apologies his regret that the ill-health of his wife made anything in the way of entertainment out of the question—his favourite excuse nowadays. 'Plenty of foxes!' he exclaimed, in answer to the Master's query. 'Can hear the beggars barking at night in Home Wood. Hogin says one lays up every day in the plantation at the end of the Park. Better try that first, eh?'

SHERRY AND SANDWICHES

'Just as you like; the sooner we find the better,' replied Mr. Thornton, exchanging a wink with his secretary, Dr. Bolter. Accordingly, after the 'light refreshments' had been disposed of, a move was made to the covert in question, the field discussing with considerable amusement the latter-day hospitality at the Hall, and the particular reason why 'old Burrell' should have suggested the first draw.

The plantation was a long narrow slip bordering the Park for perhaps half a mile; the undergrowth being sparse, it was an easy place for hounds to draw, and they quickly worked through

two-thirds of its length before anything happened. Then the silence was suddenly broken, and every hound seemed to speak at once. Almost immediately from the far end came a clear 'Yoi! gorn away!' Hounds raced through the covert, and the field tore alongside. On reaching the open Hogin was discovered yelling at the top of his voice, and excitedly pointing with his stick in the direction of Tinderley. 'Just in front of you, as fine a dog fox as ever was seen! Slipped through that gap there!' he shouted. And sure enough the pack came streaming over the fence, and raced across towards the place indicated. Once through the gap they turned sharp to the left up wind, and sped on towards Highcombe Holt (a Burrell preserve). Hogin could be heard screaming behind, 'That's wrong! More to the right!' but nobody heeded. Hounds could not be wrong; for scent was so good that, though highly musical as a rule, they now ran almost mute. Slap through the centre of Highcombe they flung out into the open for a couple of fields, then straight into the middle of Longwood; the field pounded along the sides of the great preserve at top speed, and began to think that after all they might have judged the owner too severely. After making the tour of Longwood in three parts of a circle the open was faced once more, and the line led off away over the plough to Bogsike. Close to where hounds entered this covert some labourers were at work, and as he galloped past them the huntsman shouted, 'How long is he gone?' 'Dunno; we ain't seen 'un,' they replied. Queer that the fox should have passed within twenty yards of the men, and equally curious they should not have viewed him, the huntsman thought; but the ways of foxes are strange, and there was no time for speculating as to whys and wherefores; sufficient that the hounds were still tied to the line. They could not be wrong, judging from the style they ran. Progress was somewhat slower through Bogsike, a thick overgrown place, but never once were they at fault as they ran the covert from end to end. Leaving Captain Banger's preserve on the right, they made towards Hanby Wood; through this they spun, then, turning short away from Squire Horton's woods, they came back to Ashholt, and from there by way of Ferndale, The Hollies, and Farthings to Home Wood, thus completing the grand tour of all Mr. Burrell's most cherished coverts, scattering his game all over the county, and making glad the hearts of his shooting neighbours.

On emerging from Farthings, hounds headed across the Park straight for the Hall, and bustled through the laurels and rhodo-

dendrons at the back of the house. Then over the fence they scrambled and into the kitchen garden. They were closely followed by some of the keenest spirits, who, probably owing to the twisting and turning of the line, had very little idea of their whereabouts. Anyhow an ominous crash! crash! proclaimed the fact that a brace had landed amongst the glass frames, whilst a third went souse into the large tank containing liquid manure. Hearing the cry of hounds, the squire was roused from the perusal of his game book, and rushed to the window in time to view

SLIPPED THROUGH THAT GAP THERE!

the pack go flying across the ornamental pleasure gardens, closely attended by three riderless horses (owners in cucumber frames and manure tank). Over the well-kept lawns they swept, the loose horses playing terrible havoc. Rattling along the drive came the excited field, casting showers of gravel in each other's faces, and demolishing the neat grass edges. Out rushed 'old Burrell' in a towering rage. 'Hi! I won't have this! My garden is ruined! Stop the hounds! Stop those beastly horses! Stop 'em, can't you?' But stopping the pack was out of the question, even if the huntsman had so desired; they were evi-

dently racing for blood, well knowing the habits of beaten foxes. Across the tidy flower-beds and through the rose garden they tore, then out by the tradesmen's gate and back into the laurels. A momentary check here occurred, and the owner of the cruelly damaged property rushed up, commanding in most forcible language that the hounds should be whipped off. Before a suitable reply could be framed, they were on it again, and the whole field, who had now got together, were in time to see them leave the laurels once more and make a pretty race with Hogin towards the out-buildings which struggled from the north wing of the Hall. 'Stop 'em! Stop 'em!' yelled the terrified keeper, sprinting for all he was worth. But the pack passed him easily, and, with bristles erect, hurled themselves, fighting as to which should be first, through the wide open window of the gun-room. 'They've got him now,' exclaimed the huntsman, jumping from his horse. 'Here, Hogin, unlock this door sharp, or there won't be a scrap of him left,' he shouted, rattling the latch. Slowly and unwillingly the crestfallen keeper produced his keys. The door was unfastened and in rushed the huntsman, who, instead of seeing the pack in the act of tearing the life out of their quarry, to his astonishment discovered them at the far end of the room all struggling and quarrelling with each other in their anxiety to scratch and bite at a packing-case which stood in the corner. 'Ah, the rascal is behind there!' cried the huntsman to Mr. Burrell, who, with an expression combining anxiety, bewilderment, and rage, had followed into the gun-room. 'Rubbish and nonsense!' he exclaimed. 'Turn the brutes out, I say; there's no fox there. Drive the idiots out, I tell you!' But the command fell on deaf ears, and, forcing his way through the frantic hounds, the man hauled the box away from the wall. 'Dash my buttons,' he yelled, 'the varmint's inside, and blowed if he hasn't *nailed himself down!*'

Attracted by the hubbub and Mr. Burrell's loud protestations, the Master and several of the field dismounted and hurried to the scene.

'Confounded impertinence! Who ever heard of such a thing!' shouted the bewildered squire. Turning to Mr. Thornton he screamed, 'Whip these stupid devils of yours out! I will not have my gun-room turned into a kennel to please anybody. Tell your servant to stop this tomfoolery; the idiot says the fox is in there!'—pointing to the case at which the pack was still tearing as savagely as ever.

'My hounds seem to be saying so too, and they don't usually lie,' quietly responded Mr Thornton.

THE FROLIC AMONG THE FRAMES

Meanwhile, the huntsman had found a chisel on a shelf, and at a nod from his master began to set to work on the lid.

'Hi, confound you, let that box alone! I will not have it touched!' screamed poor Burrell, fearing the worst. 'Let it alone, you blanked housebreaking rascal!' and fighting his way through the hounds he attempted to snatch the tool from the busy worker. Alas, he was too late! the lid came flying off assisted by many

'STOP 'EM! STOP 'EM!'

eager claws and teeth. 'Who whoop,' and something red and furry was drawn unresisting from the box by a score of savage mouths. In the scuffle which ensued poor Burrell was overturned, and lay kicking and swearing beneath the surging fighting demons. Such a pandemonium in so confined a space had surely never been seen or heard before. 'Who whoop!' yelled the field, who now crowded at the doorway and open window. 'Pull him out,' roared Mr. Thornton above the din; 'the man will be killed.' A

couple of men seized one of the recumbent squire's struggling legs, not without certain damage to themselves, and soon hauled him clear of the *mêlée*. Scratched and bleeding, his clothes in rags, the wretched man was a sight to behold; and though purple in the face and almost breathless, his threats and language could be heard above the howling hubbub, making one's hair curl to listen: 'Who put the —— fox here? I'll prosecute every man Jack of you!' he screamed.

'Dead! dead!' shouted the huntsman to his hounds. With the aid of his hunting-whip he drove them from the torn carcase, and seizing hold, held it high above his head. 'Come outside with him, Tom,' beckoned the Master; and the crowd of men and hounds, followed by the fuming Burrell, made their way to the lawn.

The customary rites having been performed, the fox was hurled with many 'who whoops' to the eager pack, who nevertheless only played a tug-of-war for a few seconds, and then one by one left the body and sauntered away or lay down, absolutely refusing in spite of every encouragement to eat a morsel, or even break it up. 'Cold as h'ice,' explained grinning Tom to his equally amused master, who stood with the now considerably more sobered squire watching the scene. The latter, though still expostulating, had adopted a more civil and even conciliatory tone. 'Never heard of such a thing in my life, Thornton. Stupid practical joke. Can't imagine who is at the bottom of it all.' 'Oh, can't you?' replied the Master; 'it's perfectly apparent to me. Better ask your pet rascal Hogin, doubtless he will be happy to explain.' With this and never a 'good-day,' he turned to where his horse was standing, mounted, and with the rest of the highly delighted field filed out of the gates, leaving the thoroughly discomfited and dilapidated squire to puzzle the thing out as best he might. Poor Burrell! that fox in the box ended his hopes of recognition in the county. He wrote a most humble and apologetic letter to Mr. Thornton, containing a shockingly feeble and palpably untrue explanation of the affair, laying the entire blame on his head-keeper; but it received no answer. His nearest neighbours even cut him dead. Invitations to shoot or dine at Hanby met with no response. Our sporting butcher even declined to serve him. The faithful Hogin was dismissed, but all to no purpose. For a year or so he hung on, hoping things would take a turn; but at last he was compelled to clear out, and Hanby came again into the market. 'Slippery Sam' is now once more in respectable employment: he is feeder at our kennels.

THE STIKINE RIVER: THE ROUTE TO KLONDYKE

BY CLIVE PHILLIPS-WOLLEY

[This article, the publication of which has been unavoidably postponed, was written early in the year 1895. It will be found of special interest at the present time. Not only does the writer foretell the great rush of gold-seekers which has since taken place, but he describes the new route to the Klondyke. The illustrations, which are from photographs taken by the author, give an idea of the desolate and wild scenery of the district.]

MEN do not expect to find a fairyland on any continent to-day, and least of all in our somewhat Scotch and practical Nor'-West. Even the South Sea Islands have a commercial interest as sugar producers, and send round a show of not too ingenuous maids and men; and though, when the grouse are drumming and the cedar swamps are heavy with the musk of the skunk cabbage, I sometimes fancy that I catch a glimpse of fairyland through the green lacework of hemlock and cedar on Vancouver Island, I know that I am wrong; the red gold is but the gold of the honeysuckle drooping over the deep blue of a forest tarn, and the tiny mailed knights are only bronze-bodied humming-birds darting or poising amongst the blossoms.

But if our fairyland has been explored and exploded, our Jötunheim, thank Heaven, remains. Here we call our Jötunheim Cassiar and Beyond, and it lies, as Jötunheim must lie, to the north of us, beyond seas of the North Pacific, as grey with mist, as vexed by storms, and as full of all vague and monstrous shapes as ever were the seas where the Vikings held sway.

Look at the two seas on the map and you will find them in about the same latitude (the North Sea, I mean, and the seas round Fort Wrangel), and though they lie a world apart, you will, if you look at them in Nature, find them not alone alike, inlet for fiord, and pine for pine, but alike in the dreams they suggest,

and maybe alike in the future in the race they shall produce. That breed of men which has braced and strengthened a whole world with the salt of the North Sea is finding a congenial home in the North Pacific, under conditions and amongst environments uncommonly like those from which it drew its first gigantic strength. We are sea things still, we English, and the grey roughness of northern seas to battle against suits us better than the luxuries of civilisation and the sloth of peaceful days.

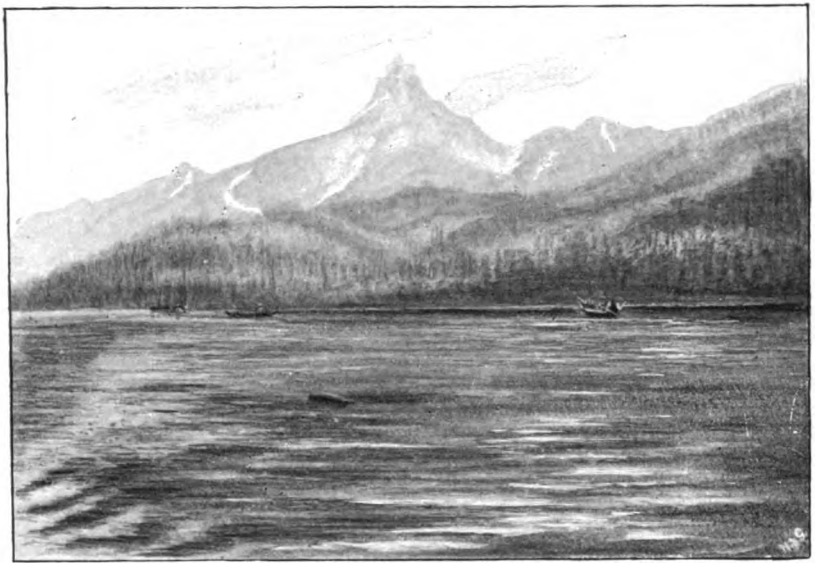
The gates of our Jötunheim are at the mouth of the Stikine River, which is the first stage on the road and a vast country still unexplored, with reserves of gold and fur still untouched; a country peopled by primitive men still free from the curse of civilisation and the responsibility of a moral law; a country teeming with great game, full of questions to be solved and knowledge to be acquired; a country which stretches from the coast range to the Arctic, having an area of nearly 200,000 square miles.

But men are already peering beyond the gates of Jötunheim. The whisper of 'Gold on the Jakon!' has been heard unmistakably this year, and soon the reckless, fearless leaders whom all the world follows but ignores, the prospectors and pioneers, in blue overalls and flannel shirts, stone-broke and perfectly happy, will pour down the Arctic slope as they have poured across the Pacific slope, in California, in Cariboo, and on the Fraser. Good luck be with them! They may be rough, but they are *men*, and that is much in these days. Already there are towns in Yankee Yukon, Circle City, Fort Andally, and a settlement, I fancy, on Golden Miller Creek, from which men took not a few pounds in dust last year, though there were but 900 to 1,000 miners in the whole of the Yukon district. This year there will be a rush; in 1896 there will be, if reports are still favourable, a greater rush; already roads to the Unknown are being surveyed, and my daily paper contains a notice that someone has applied to the dominion for a charter to build a railway from the Jaku River, which is unexplored and over which we have no rights of navigation, to Teslin Lake.

It is time, then, if we would sketch the old life of the Stikine and Cassiar, to do so at once. From time immemorial the great river has been the Indian's main road from the coast to the interior, the market-place upon which were exchanged the strange things of civilisation for the furs of the Far North.

Certain families of Phlinkits (Coast Indians) had a monopoly of this business with the interior and compelled the Tal Tans

from the head of the river to do all their trade with them; no doubt the Tal Tans in their turn had similar arrangements with the Kaskas, and they with some one else a hundred miles further north, until, after years of freighting, the goods of Birmingham rested in the possession, say, of a Yellow Knife hunter of musk oxen, on the barrens beyond Great Slave Lake. I wonder what proportion the last price in those days bore to the first price, since even now a rifle which costs eleven dollars at Seattle can be



TOWING A FREIGHT BOAT PAST SACHOCHLÈ

sold for about fifty dollars just beyond the head of steamboat navigation?

As far as white men are concerned the history of the Stikine began in 1834, when the Hudson Bay Company tried to make use of it as a road to the Cassiar fur district. In this attempt the Hudson Bay Company was frustrated by the Russians, who, however, subsequently leased their Fort Dionysius (or Wrangel), together with the Alaskan coast strip, to the Company.

Fur-seekers first, as usual; but the gold-seekers were not far behind them. In 1861 Choquette came wandering through from heaven knows where, with pick and shovel and pan, and found gold on the river bars. This brought the first wave of miners to the country. In 1873 Thibert (a little Frenchman) and

McCullough found gold on the streams which run into Dease Lake, having wandered thither from the Red River by way of the Liard, trusting for food principally to the fish in the lakes *en route*.

In two years from two to four thousand miners had joined Thibert and McCullough in their scramble for gold, and about two million dollars' worth of dust was sent down from Cassiar to the coast in that time; but McCullough got caught by winter on 'the desert' at the mouth of the Stikine, out of reach of help though in sight of home, and died there of cold or hunger, whilst the last time I met Thibert he was trying to make a dollar by his old trade of harness-maker. He was about equally anxious to sell dog-collars and to 'get a show' to go to the Jakon next spring. Like all the boys he is sanguine still, though he has seen several millions drop through his fingers without a dime of it sticking to them.

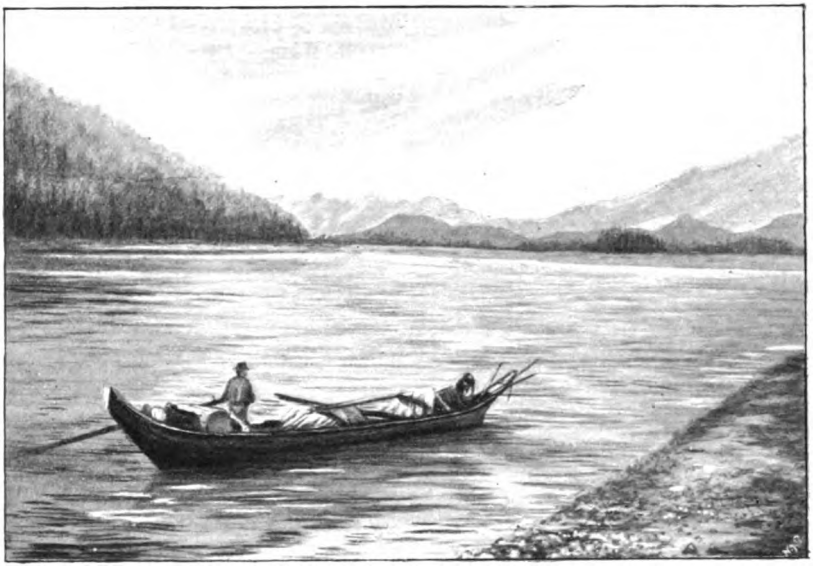
Since 1875 the Cassiar has gradually relapsed into its natural quiet. A few prospectors still crawl in and out, tattered, toil-bent men, mere ghosts of the past; but the darkest hour has come, and it will soon be dawn again on the Stikine.

We know so little nowadays of the meaning of hardship, that for the sake of education a few more men should visit our Nor'-West and see for themselves what a fisher's or hunter's life is in crank canoes amongst the islands of the North Pacific, or look on at, if they could not share, the lives of the gold-seekers.

They might then know what courage means; might even take a low degree in the art of travel, which has nothing to do with Pullman cars and Cunard steamers; might learn that though wet socks will give the townsman a cold in the head if he does not 'change as soon as ever he gets in,' a season of soaking *in the open air* will give neither cold nor rheumatism to a sixty-year-old trapper; might have some rough guess of what sixty degrees below zero means in pain and suffering, and be able to decide whether it is better to pack your blankets *and three months' provisions* on your own back, or to take with you a dried salmon and your rifle, trusting to the latter and some rabbit snares for food and to a blazing log for nightly warmth, when bedded down on a pile of pine boughs in the snow.

These are the things which pioneers and gold-seekers and Hudson Bay men know. When we read their dry old voyages, mere statements of how far they went and where they camped, we do not realise what these old heroes dared, what these hard,

silent Scotchmen suffered; we don't understand what 'made twenty miles up the Stikine against a head wind' means in hard labour, any more than we guess that the statement that 'François pushed 200 lbs. across the portage' should be supplemented by the statement that he afterwards died in Victoria, while still a young man, from aneurism of the heart; we don't imagine for a moment that canoeing is anything but a pleasant, idle pastime, during which the head of the expedition lies on a robe and smokes; we can't believe that up some rivers there can be no passengers, and that an upset means death by starvation, if not



THE STIKINE RIVER

by drowning; for man, even the hardiest and the handiest, cannot live in northern wilds without any artificial adjuncts, axe or match, rifle or canoe.

Twice I have travelled on the Stikine. The first time I went as a bear-hunter, and it seemed to me that I had dropped in unexpectedly on the first day of creation. The earth, as seen through a black curtain of ceaseless rain, appeared to be without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. The mouth of the river is in about the same latitude as Mull and the rainfall is much the same in both places (from 50 to 75 inches in Mull, and about 60 inches, according to Dr. Dawson, at Wrangel), but at Tongars the rainfall reaches 100 inches per annum, whilst

the snowfall at the mouth of the Stikine is sometimes ten feet deep. It is not a tourist's river, but it is a grand river for salmon and glaciers and grizzlies. The road to Wrangel from Victoria lies over a dull grey sea, flecked in autumn with little vicious white waves, and pitted by wind-driven rain. At times the mists clear and the sea looks a yachtsman's paradise, but as a rule the mist hides the distance, broken only by the shaggy outlines of pine-covered islands, from which rise spouts and columns of white fog.

On the sea front of such an island lies Wrangel, a townlet, for the most part on the beach, built, of course, of wood, and inhabited by hibernating miners and fish-eating Indians.

At one end of the one street are the wharf, the few stores, and the white men. One side of this street practically overhangs the sea by only a very few feet at high tide. Beyond the stores the street becomes one-sided; there is no room for houses on the seaside, where the Indian canoes lie on the weed-covered boulders and a hundred mongrel dogs fight day and night over fish offal. At the end of all is the house of Shek, the hereditary chief of the Phlinkits, reached by a single plank bridge across a slough. Shek is the best canoe captain on the Stikine, the representative of those wild monopolists who traded with the Tal Tans; he is owner of several magnificent totem poles, up which climb the tracks of the grizzly, and which hardly seem to lie when they suggest that Shek himself and his immediate ancestors have been evolved from the bear of his native river.

There is only one residence of any importance beyond the chief's, and that is the burying-ground, over which a winged saurian (with his anatomy painted outside) watches year by year, whilst the tall weeds struggle up to hide him, and men forget those who make the weeds grow rank.

There are no suburbs, no walks, no 'buggy rides' in Wrangel. You cannot take a constitutional if you want to. There are no trails in the woods; there are no beaches by the sea. If there is anything between wood and water, it is bog and boulder.

Man's life is fashioned by his environments. At Wrangel his environments are such that he slips quite naturally from his blankets into his 'gum' boots and macintosh; then, as Wrangel is a prohibition town, he goes round to a certain place and takes a drink; then he smokes a cigar, plays a game of patience with an old pack of cards in a corner, breakfasts in a devil of a hurry, as if the necessity of supporting life alone warranted such a waste of time, and then, if energetic, he may go down

to catch a basket of fish from the pier-head for his dogs, or give another fellow advice as to the best way to saw a log. Perhaps this sounds overdrawn. If so, try to start from Wrangel for the upper country, and by the time you have spent a week there waiting, you will begin to understand how it is that the impossibility of doing much makes men, even these naturally energetic men, too torpid to do anything. The climate, too, is to blame. Moss must grow there on all things animate and inanimate. Day and night, month after month, there is music in Wrangel—the music of water washing against the foundations of the houses, of water running in the streets, of rain rattling upon the roof-trees. The houses are rotten with rain, the road is a marsh, the sidewalk (of planks) is slippery with green vegetable growths, the living pines are mildewed at the top, grass waves from the top of the totem poles, and one church sags away so heavily from its stays that I hardly like to write of it as a thing that still is. Everything at Wrangel is wet and misty and has a half-created look. Even the law of the land is chaotic. Unique in this, I think Wrangel is subject to two codes of law, the law of Alaska and the law of Oregon, and, as I understand, it is open to those having authority to proceed under either code, as it is undoubtedly easy for those under authority to evade both. In all my experience of Wrangel I only heard a man grumble at the law once, and had he not cause? He was an ingenuous whiskey smuggler, for whom the authorities had provided rooms in the prison-house. At 9 P.M. he rushed into the saloon 'quite upset.'

'Damnation, boys!' he yelled; 'this whole institution is going to hell. Say! What do you think? I came along home about ten minutes ago and they would not let me in! *They have locked me out of the Skukum House for the night!*' If that was not severity, what is? but I understand that a more liberal and broad-minded administrator has now decided to furnish all tenants of the Skukum House with latchkeys.

And yet you see, after all I have said, Wrangel is a hard place to get away from, even on paper. Dr. Dawson says truly, in his report of 1887, that steamers, 'stern-wheelers of light draught and good power,' can navigate the river to Glenora, 126 miles from its mouth, 'and under favourable circumstances to Telegraph Creek, twelve miles further;' but they sometimes take over a fortnight to do it in, and employ their passengers for most of the time in getting the boat up stream, consequently it is not wonderful that a very great deal of the travel is done in canoes.

Now, a canoe is not much good without Indians, and when I

was last at Wrangel Indians were hard to hire. They don't like hard work more than other men, and boating on the Stikine is very hard; besides, for them Wrangel is a paradise. When the tide is out, their table is spread. There are clams and 'gum-boots' for the gathering on the shore; anyone can catch a basket of fish from the pier, or a halibut large enough to feed a family for a week in the bay. Two Indians, when I was there last, killed fifty deer, two wolves, and a bear in about a fortnight's hunting on the islands within a few miles of the town, and there are always the white men's stores to loaf and smoke cigarettes in when they tire of their own rancherie.

So my friend and I could not get a crew. He proposed that we should paddle our own canoe, and assured me that if I made no 'misslick' with the paddle it would be all right.

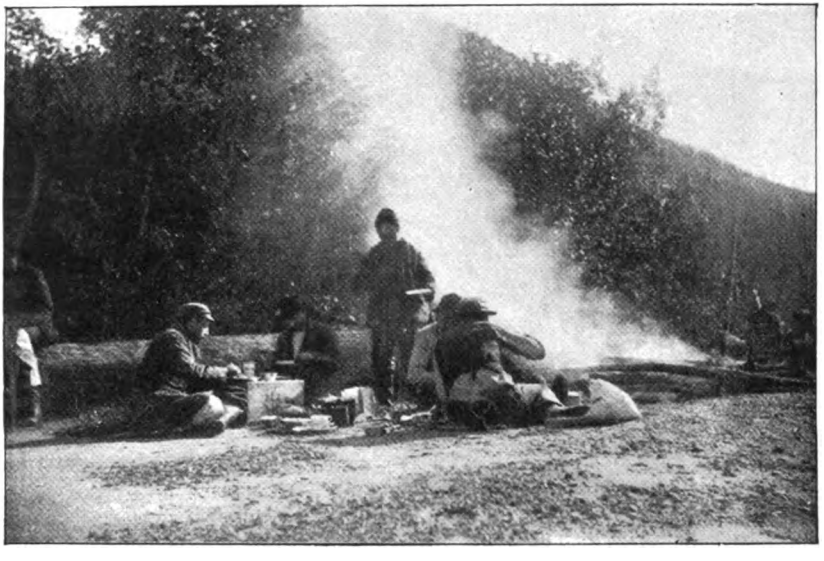
But I was not prepared to promise that I would make no 'misslick' in 150 miles or so of canoeing on such a river, and therefore proposed instead that we should volunteer to go as two of the crew in a trader's boat, which was also detained for want of Indians. The canoe had nearly 4,000 lbs. of bulky freight on board, and only two 'Siwashes,' besides the steerer; but we were fairly strong men and known on the river, so Johnny the trader accepted our offer, and we not only worked our passage, but were offered thirty-five dollars and board if at any time we could find no easier way of earning our living than by taking freight up the Stikine.

At the mouth the Stikine runs about two miles an hour, higher up it has a current of from five to six miles an hour, and it is not difficult to imagine that a canoe piled high with bales which cramp the rowers' legs is no pleasure-boat for the crew, whether they propel it with clumsy oars in the slack water, with back-breaking, chest-contracting paddles, with poles on the shallows and in the rapids, or drag it at the end of a tow-line, walking waist-deep in the water, or skating over a bank of battered boulders set occasionally at a precipitous angle. But the work, though hard, is not the worst of the Stikine, though during our ten days we could rarely steal a pipe between breakfast and lunch, or lunch and dinner. If you were not rowing monotonously against a strong stream, you were poling for dear life, each man afraid to take an 'easy' because the strength of all was only just adequate to the strain. At the end of the rapid it would be necessary to cross the river; so that, just as you were prepared to sink from exhaustion, 'Jim the Boatman' would sing out, 'Get oars—quick—pull like——' and you pulled frantically,

careless whether your heart stopped or not, until the boat just made the end of the opposite sand-bar, when up went the oars, and everyone tumbled out into the water, ran out the line, hitched on the shoulder-straps, and started full pace at a new kind of slavery.

This kind of thing is common to all northern rivers, but the camps on the Stikine, below the cañon, are peculiar to the Stikine—luckily.

They are all on sand-bars, with one or two exceptions, and those are on gravel-beds. You cannot get back into the timber; it is too dense, and the nature of it is horrible to man. The



LUNCHEON ON THE STIKINE

undergrowth is largely of devil's club (*Farsia horrida*), a vile, broad-leaved growth, covered with thousands of fine thorns, which invariably cause a small fester before leaving your flesh, and even the spruces and other conifers are hard and thorny to the touch. You cannot push through the forest; you may consider yourself lucky if you find any boughs suitable for bedding near your camp, and luckier still if you can find decent wood to burn below the cañon. Above the cañon everything changes. There you reach the dry belt, where cultivated patches have to be irrigated; below you are in the wet belt, where you must sit and face your fire with a frying-pan if you want to keep it alight.

It is a cheerful position from which to survey life, that of fire-tender on the Stikine, when the dark begins to fall amongst the dumb woods, where no squirrels chatter, no birds call. The only signs of life around the camp are the great tracks on the sand (where last night the she bear and her cubs came down to fish), the 'houk houk' of passing geese, the splash of dying salmon on the creek where you filled your kettle, later on the resounding smack of the beaver's tail, and withal the tireless accompaniment of the rain. To such music you try to sleep, and not in vain, if your bed is a gravel-bar and not a sand-spit. On a gravel-bar you can find room for a sore bone between the pebbles, but sand packs harder than the bed of a billiard table, and your only chance then is to lie flat on your back, where there are no special corners to be worn down.

As elsewhere in British Columbia, the salmon is the basis of all life on the Stikine. Twice a year he comes flashing up from the sea, a dark swift shadow, which the Indians spear near the mouths of the Stikine's tributary streams. There is a white man's cannery at the mouth of the river, and several Indians' drying-grounds between the mouth and the Tal Tan fishery, but the toll these take seems to make no difference. Year after year the little streams are full of ill-formed, hook-nosed monsters, rotting as they swim, crimson with corruption, or colourless as they drift down stream, tails upward, dead and decomposing as they drift. None ever return to the sea, the Indians tell you, and though I have watched for days and weeks by these streams for bear, I have never yet seen anything like a 'mended' keel. And yet the supply continues, and bears pack the red fish up into the woods, eagles gorge themselves on them until they cannot fly, otherwise respectable mallards render themselves unfit for table by eating them, the grey seals follow them far up the river, the mink dines on them, and I almost suspect the porcupine of similar iniquity. But I may wrong this last beast. Poor old Salmon! I ought to be ashamed to look at you, for have I not killed you in every way but the legitimate one? Have I not speared you with sharpened pine-poles, shot you on the shallows, clubbed you with a paddle when you were left nearly high and dry, snatched you, tickled you, poached you generally? and yet it was your fault, because you are such an uncivilised idiot that you won't take a fly.

For a description of the river scenery when the rain stops and the clouds lift I must refer my readers to the illustrations, and for scientific information to the admirable report of Professor

Dawson, 1887, from which I have already quoted more than once.

I only propose to sketch the Stikine life as I saw it. This life begins from April to May, just before the ice breaks up; just after the bears have begun to leave their dens and to come out on the stone slides to crop the grass, and on to the river bottoms to look for young alder buds. At this time of the year a bear coat is prime, and is worth from twenty-five to thirty-five dollars to the Indians, and moreover at this time of the year even a grizzly can be hunted in snow-shoes with dogs without any

'CAPTAIN' KOW KEESH

great risk to the hunter. At any other time of the year the few bear-hunting Indians on the Stikine treat the grizzly with marked respect, letting him severely alone in summer, when with worthless, mangy coat he wanders about on the sand-bars, and in autumn depending upon huge snares set something like rabbit snares, rather than upon their rifles, for the few hides they get. Indeed, so shy is the Stikine Indian of the big brown bear that a friend of mine tells a story of two guides of his who used to 'tree' on sight of one.

The summer on the Stikine is the freighting season; a season of hard work, high water, and plenty. The low hoops of willow

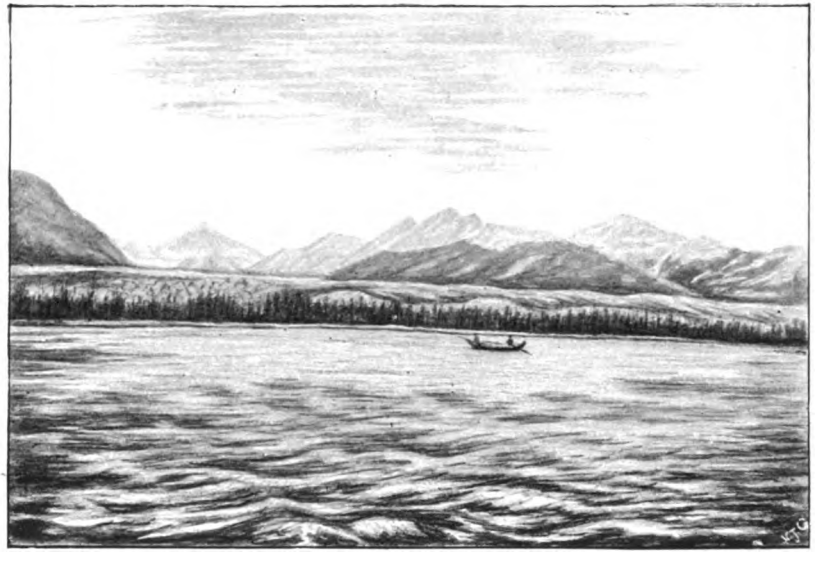
wands left sticking in the sand-bars near old camp-fires tell the story of a misery peculiar to this season on the Stikine. Those hoops were put up to form the ribs of a kind of cocoon in which some poor wretch tried to avoid the mosquitoes.

The autumns, with their rains, I have sketched, and now, about the twentieth of October, I am starting from Telegraph Creek down stream. If you come with me I will give you a last glimpse of the river before the voice of it is stilled and the life of it hidden for the winter. Our object is to reach a certain salmon stream, to have a week with the big grizzlies on it before the river closes up, and to do this we must hurry, for our little two-man canoe is not the sort of thing to take chances in; indeed, to avoid the 'big riffle,' in which two people were drowned the day we came up, we walk a dozen miles and start below the bad water. Even after this we strike a snag submerged in rapid water, half fill, and only just get through, sticking to our paddles instead of stopping to sink. At the salmon stream we pick up an old trapper, and with him start at daybreak to cross a mountain spur, by doing which we hope to avoid many windings of our stream, and to strike it somewhere near its head waters. Two or three hours' brisk blundering, during which the snow shakes down our necks and melts inside our shirts, brings us out on to the stream, and in the far distance we can still see one bear on a sand-spit feeding. There are half a dozen bald-headed eagles feeding on salmon which bears have lately left; but the morning 'rise' of grizzly on our stream is over. We have come three hours too late for any stream on which men hunt; an hour too late, it seems, for a stream which has not been hunted. But the stream is still interesting, and the story of the sand-bars is as plain to read as if it was written in roundhand.

In the stream itself, a clear shallow tributary of a tributary of the Stikine, the salmon lie in pairs, 15 to 20 lb. fish as a rule, poised side by side in mid-stream, just moving their fins or tails sufficiently to keep their places against the current. The stream is full of them, and so far as we know there is not another stream in the district which has any fish in it. Most of the smaller 'criks' have already a thin coat of ice creeping out from their edges, and the whole of the stony bed of the main tributary is already covered with snow and ice. Where the salmon are, there will the bears be gathered together, and their tracks are all over the river's bank; there are roadways through the alders from the stone slides to the stream, broad footmarks with claws well-defined, footmarks in which you can stand with both feet,

and so distinct that if you were skilled in such matters you might read the bear's future by the lines on his palm; tracks of single monsters, of a couple of chums, and of family parties, but all grizzlies. There are no narrow-heeled black bears here. We decide to try for the chums, and old Bert, who is grey-headed and slight-built, offers to go into the alder thicket between the 'slide' and the stream to 'hustle' the beggars out 'so as you can get a shot, Cap.'

To make a fitting finish for a magazine article, those bears ought to have been hustled out, or ought to have grievously chewed up poor old Bert. As a matter of fact they neither bolted



THE GREAT GLACIER ON THE STIKINE

nor charged, and I prefer foolishly tc keep my fancy pictures for my boys' stories, which are avowedly yarns; but one bear did show himself, 300 yards away; a huge fellow, looking almost black in the sunlight, who walked quietly away and climbed slowly up the stone slide like one who hates exertion after a full meal, stopping from time to time to have a look at the intruder. I believe now that he would have let me run in close enough for a shot, but I did not know then how bold the bears were in this district, and I let him go until I saw him lie down on a ledge far up on the stone slide. Then I tried to climb another stone slide and come down from above him; but the rock

face was steep and the climbing difficult, so that by the time I had almost reached my point, Bert had found and shot at another bear, and mine, hearing the shots, had moved away. When I got down again to the level, Bert was hauling driftwood together for a fire; but on my appearing he looked doubtfully at the darkening sky, and consented to try to reach camp that night. We had far better have caught a salmon and stayed where we were, for in a couple of hours the darkness had become complete, and we had, in an attempt to make a short cut, waded so many of the arms of the main stream that we found ourselves out in the middle of the river-bed, with more streams to wade, wet to the waist, and the next stream so swift and deep that the old man, after trying it for a little way, came back to me.

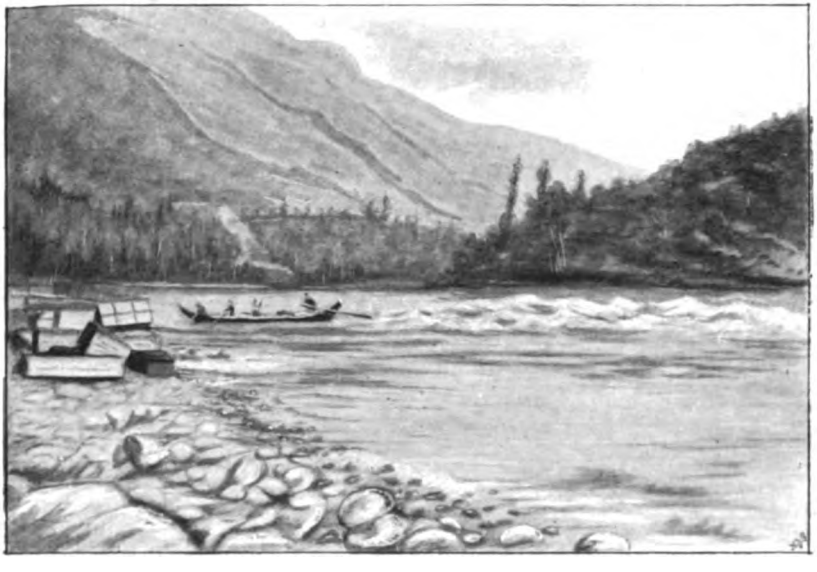
'It's too deep and too tarnation strong, Cap.; we couldn't make it, and we'll drown if we try.'

'Then what are we to do?' I asked.

'Make a fire, if we can; walk about all night or freeze solid if we can't. Scratch round in them drift piles under the snow and ice if you can't find a bit of bark.'

As luck would have it, I found a piece, and then stood and shivered whilst Bert filled his hat with shavings, and watched with interest whilst the tiny spark of light flickered and struggled, the only bright thing in that great gloom. But Bert nursed the little flame well, and in half an hour the drift-pile itself was on fire; we had poured the water out of our snow-boots and stripped ourselves to dry our clothes, and were being burned by the fierce sparks whilst we stood in the snow, the wind meantime curling like a whip-lash round our bodies. All that night we stood, scorching on one side and freezing stiff on the other, watching our hour-glass, the moon, sail so slowly across the broad valley, until she dipped behind the western ridge, and then the grey of morning came and we began to wade again. When we reached camp it was midday, and we had eaten nothing since dawn the day before; and the old man's only comment was, 'By George, the Cap. never let a grunt [*i.e.* grumbled] all night.' *He*, an old man of sixty-five, praising a stronger man twenty-five years his junior for bearing what he had borne! What must the measure of that old man's endurance be for himself? But these are the men who still push our frontiers to the North; men who are never heard of, who do not even know themselves what fine fellows they are, but talk with regret and bated breath of the colonial politicians, railway chartermongers, and boodlers whose doings fill the papers, and who sit in the high places in the synagogue.

We came across another specimen of Northern 'grit' when B., P., and I were up the Stikine before. Of course it was raining, and Bob, I think, was on the point of firing at a skein of Canada geese when a shout stopped him, and we both saw the craziest craft afloat come drifting towards us. No wonder the geese had been so scared by its appearance that they almost flew in our faces. It had been a canoe, and there were still parts of the original structure left, but the bottom of it was bandaged in a sail and held together by such an adjustment of rope and canvas as no one could have contrived but a British bluejacket; there were no oars, no paddles, no steering gear to this craft; the water lipped



PORTAGING AT GRAND RAPIDS

in every now and then over the side of it, and it always seemed a toss-up whether it sank or floated. And yet four men were trying to make a journey of 100 miles in it, down a swift and dangerous river, whose waters are so cold that even the stoutest can hardly live in them long enough to save himself!

When we had dragged the canoe to a sand-spit, three men carried a bundle of wet blankets from the bottom of their wreck, and laid it by the fire we were building.

By-and-bye the blankets opened, and a weak but cheery voice hailed us, 'How are you making it, boys? Seems to me this is pretty good.' The speaker was a lad of twenty-three, who had had

nothing to eat for, as far as I remember, thirty-six hours; who had during that time lain in the bottom of the craft I have described, nearly blind, all but deaf, his face blue from the effects of a dynamite accident, and the stump of one of his arms still bleeding through the rough wrap in which it was bound!

In the spring, when the ice was considered unsafe, he had made his way alone up the river to Telegraph Creek, though he knew nothing of the road, or of the use of snow-shoes. Yet he arrived alive, though nearly starving. After a summer's work at the mine, he had blown himself up with dynamite (they call it 'giant powder' in Jötunheim), and after tying up the stump of an arm in his pocket-handkerchief, had been helped to sit a horse, from the mine to the river, upon which he had embarked with his mates, making down stream for the sea and a doctor. It was the old story, 'the more haste the less speed.' The 'boys' tried to run the river at night, struck a snag in rough water, and knocked the whole bottom out of the boat, losing oars and paddles, food and axe, and everything but their lives and the wreck of their canoe. As they struggled in the water for their lives, this is what they heard from the darkness of the mid-stream:

'Stay with it, boys; don't mind me—I am bully.' The one-armed lad clinging to the snag that split the canoe, in that boil of waters, was thinking of the other men and was 'bully'! Since then they had starved and shivered, and he must have suffered, but he never once complained.

Bob and I gave them all a square meal and then sent them on in our canoe with our Indians, sitting down ourselves on the sand-spit until they could send some one to us; and I think, though the boy was an American citizen, we were proud men when we remembered that his name was Ferguson, and that therefore he probably came, as we came, 'of the Blood,' as Kipling puts it.

But I have left my bears behind somewhat abruptly, and indeed I had to, for as soon as I reached camp I found that the ice was running.

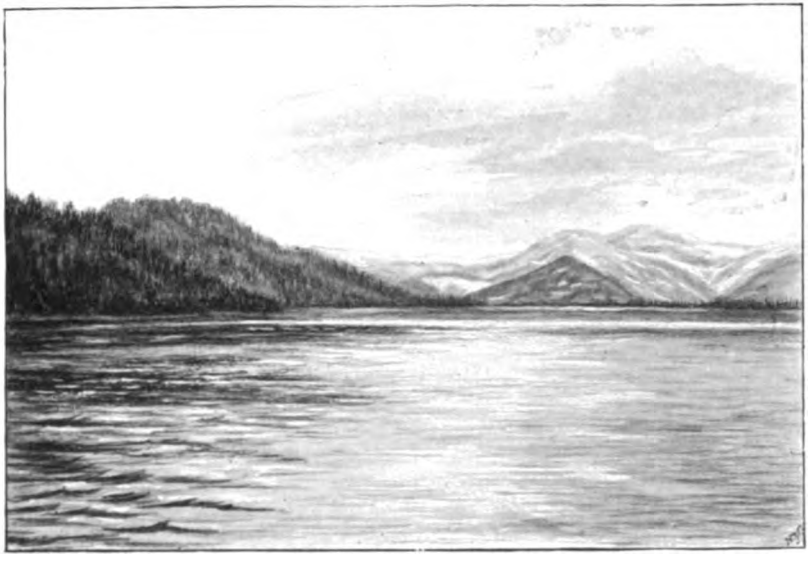
When we had had our last meal, some thirty hours before, the river was clear; now great cakes of dirty ice-cream seemed to fill it from bank to bank, moving, too, so slowly that you almost expected every minute to see it stop and turn to hard ice under your eyes.

'You had better stop with me for the winter, Cap.,' urged Bert. 'I've got 600 lbs. of flour and some other stuff, and I'd be right glad to have your company.'

At that moment Bert, who is a poor man, had one (his only) companion dependent upon him; and though I refused, I know that he fully meant what he said when he offered to feed me and my two men for the winter. This is the way of poor men generally; it is the way of the men of the North always.

'Well, then, if you'll not stop, you'll have to take my boat. That coffin isn't safe, but it will do for me to drag my grub in up stream, or over the ice,' said Bert, and in this he had his way.

Ten minutes later we had eaten as much beaver-tail and damper as we could find room for, and were pushing our way down stream through the sludge ice, wondering if there are many



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE GREAT GLACIER

men in the world who at sixty-five can wade all day in half-frozen water, who will try to beat out grizzlies like pheasants, or who will offer a winter's board and their only boat to comparative strangers.

That afternoon we ran out of the ice and camped where the river was clear, in the very heart of a drift pile. Even there we could not escape the bitter wind, and between the cold and the hard sand and the smoke we had no great temptation to sleep. And yet we slept too long. The ice was after us, and the ice does not stop to camp at night. When I went out in the starlight about three o'clock the river was blocked again as far as I could see. Our enemy had caught us.

Breakfast that morning took less time than lunch the day before. Both Murray, the young miner who was with me, and the Indian were anxious. All the Indian hunting camps were deserted; their fires had been cold for a week; we were the last on the river, and as we had no 'grub' with us we should not be able to get either up stream again or down stream to Wrangel before the ice became solid. In the meantime we should have to sit still amongst those impenetrable black pines in the deep snow and slowly starve to death. Better men, we knew, had done so before us, and we set our teeth and struggled through the ice all day, grudging ourselves time to speak or eat. We were pulling an oar apiece, and the Indian helped us a good deal with his paddle, though steering was his principal business; we only stopped when it was so dark that we dare not go on any further, and were rewarded by making over sixty miles in the day.

I confess that neither Murray (a man of eight-and-twenty, lean and spare, but weighing 215 lbs.) nor I could feel much life left in our arms when we stopped, but that did not trouble us. The ice was behind us, and could not catch us again. It would be open to us to go as far south that winter as we pleased, and we could laugh at our fears; though, if the truth be told, we had both of us had our eyes fixed almost all day upon a certain mountain far up the river, which, seen in a strange yellow mist peculiar to the wintry North, seemed like a vampire with spread wings hurrying after us. Even the Indian noticed its fantastic form. 'All same devil,' he said, and then turned his head and put a pound or two more beef into his paddling.

Next day we crossed to Wrangel, leaving our mast and the thwart through which it was stepped, blown overboard *en route*, and then the gates of Jötunheim are closed against us for six months. Ice and snow are now over everything; on the river all is deadly still; even the bears sleep; only somewhere, far above the cañon, away on the 'Hyland' and the 'Muddy,' two friends of mine are buried for the winter, and, in spite of anything the thermometer chooses to register, still hunt the moose and the caribou for food and sport, maintaining that they have a right to decide for themselves what is and what is not pleasure.

What a pity for some of us that Valhalla is not to be relied upon as the scene for the second act!

THE BOARD OF GREEN CLOTH

BY FREDERICK ADYE

Let us to billiards.—*Antony and Cleopatra*

THE last few decades have witnessed a notable change in the reputation of this splendid game. Fifty, perhaps forty, years ago the game of billiards was in rank odour. Not merely did the unco guid hold up their hands in horror at its very mention, but sensible persons of average liberality looked askance at it, associating it in their minds with cigars, brandy-and-water, late hours, and moustachioed sharpers. In short, respectable members of society generally regarded a billiard-table, as some author or other (I think Frank Smedley) has described it, 'in the light of a twenty-devil-power man-trap.' For a young man to have the reputation of frequenting billiard-rooms meant that in the estimation of the circumspect he was on the downgrade to perdition. And, truth to say, this has been lamentably often the case, for how many a fair youthful promise has been blasted by the fatal fascination of the board of green cloth! There is the case of my young friend Fitz-hazard. He went up to Camford with every prospect of taking a good degree, but had the misfortune to win his college handicap in his second term, and thereafter forsook the river and running-path (in either of which he might have found salvation) for the billiard-room. He cut lectures and spent his mornings in practising for the 'Varsity Cue, his evenings at pool with the crack players at the Clarendon. By the time he was sent down for repeated ploughs he was certainly one of the best of them, and could make upon occasion a forty or fifty break. It must not be denied that this experience has stood him in later life in good stead, for is he not now the marker at the public room in the hotel of a small provincial town, where he may be pointed out as a warning to youths who love the game, not wisely, but too well? Perhaps most of us do this at some period

of our lives. Billiard fever is as prevalent as measles, and in several cases you may see the patient hanging about the table for hours, playing whenever he can, watching with a feverish eagerness every stroke made by others. Nor is one entirely safe at a more advanced age. I have known old gentlemen hard upon sixty take it badly, and plod away night after night at the same game with a zest unimpaired by constant defeat. Generally in patients of robust mind the disease wears itself out; remedy there is none; but probably the best prophylactic is a gentle and gradual inoculation upon a private table in early youth.

Yet how unfair to the game itself has been the reputation won for it by indiscreet admirers! For where is its compeer among indoor pastimes—where so happy a combination of science and manual skill? Chess and whist are both superior as intellectual amusements, but a game of billiards exercises every muscle of the body, promotes the circulation, and if played in a properly ventilated room braces the whole system, a thing which no sedentary game can pretend to do. Neither chess nor whist, the former especially, can be to the ordinary intellect any real recreation after a day spent in mental labour. The hard head contest of the one, the constant effort of memory required for the other, the subtle combinations of both, afford to the average brain no adequate relaxation from the cares of business or the trying concentration of mind essential to most kinds of professional work. A quiet game of billiards, on the other hand, without the excitement of any serious wager dependent on the result, or a friendly pool with sixpenny lives, affords a genuine recreation to the hard-worked brain, as well as the pleasantest pastime for people of leisure on a wet day, combining moderate exercise with amusement, and involving a sufficient degree of skill to sustain the interest of the player. This degree, too, is one readily acquired with a little regular practice, supplemented by a few hints from someone possessed of a fair knowledge of the game.

The great disadvantages of the game are the expense of the table and the size of the room required to accommodate it when purchased. In houses of moderate dimensions there is not usually a room large enough to hold a full-sized table; or, when there is, it cannot always be spared for the purpose of a mere game; Materfamilias appropriates it for the dining-room or the children's playroom. Thus many a lover of billiards is driven to play either at his club, which is pleasant enough; or, if he lives in the country, at the public room in the nearest town, built generally

over the hotel stables, where he is soon disgusted with the atmospheric and social conditions, and prefers to forego his favourite pastime altogether.

This need not, however, be so often the case if he would condescend to play on a miniature table; not the very smallest, but one, say, 10 ft. × 5 ft., or even 8 ft. × 4 ft. This he generally scorns as not the real thing. But it is; the game, when once you have adapted yourself to it, is as good on the smaller as on the table of regulation size. Nay, if one happens to be short-sighted, as so many people nowadays are, it is better; the way into the top pockets, and the distance of the object ball from the cushion, being more readily discernible from baulk. Many a fine break has the writer seen made, and many an exciting finish between two evenly matched players, on one of these smaller tables. The only drawback to their use is that after playing upon them one is somewhat lost for the first few strokes on returning to a full-sized board.

Again, although we cannot claim for billiards the picturesque imaginativeness of chess, with all the varied and analogical movements of its pieces—'the plodding pawn, the common soldier that does the rough work of the battle; the active knight, ever ready to take his enemy in flank; the wily side-long bishop; the castle coming down with a rush like that of the elephants of Pyrrhus; the Amazonian Queen; the slowly moving, sacred, inviolable king'—yet it is a pleasant sight to watch the clean ivory spheres, deftly impelled by a clever cueist, travel swiftly and smoothly over the expanse of green, Nature's prevalent hue, and therefore of all colours most grateful and restful to the human eye. Interesting also to mark the nicely calculated effects of 'side' in the ball's altered course after impact with the object ball or cushion; the delicate manipulation of a nursery of cannons; the clever 'running-through' stroke; the clean-struck slanting hazard; the flying all-round-the-table cannon; or the brilliant but fluky 'doubling' of the red.

The origin of the game, if not so remote as that of chess, is nevertheless of considerable antiquity. It came to us, as so many games have come, from the French; *billiard* in that language meaning a mace, with which instrument no doubt the game was first played, although according to some authorities the ancient orthography was *balyard*, a compound of ball and yard, or ball-stick.

No other game perhaps has been so wonderfully developed by its acclimatisation in this country. The ancient game, in which

the balls were pushed with a flat-headed mace against dull cushions of list or felt, could have borne little comparison with the fast and scientific game of to-day. Now and again, standing forlornly on its six rickety spindle legs in the hall of some ancient manor house, we come across one of the old-fashioned tables, with a wooden bed, moth-eaten cloth, and list cushions, against which, one would think, a ball must have had to be struck with considerable force to make it rebound at all. What a contrast it presents to the modern table by some first-class maker, with its heavy slate bed supported by four pairs of massive legs, its resilient cushions of vulcanised rubber, and neat brass-bound pockets, or hazard nets, as they used to be called—a handsome piece of furniture, of such solidity and weight that the clumsiest player could not disturb its exact equilibrium. Slate beds were first used in this country in 1827, and since then the chief improvements have been in the cushions; the most recent being the lowering of them so as to obviate that awkward elevation of the cue-butt which used so greatly to mar the precision of the stroke in the case of a jammed ball.

Billiard balls should properly be made of ivory, but owing to the increasing difficulty of procuring that substance, they are now often manufactured of a composition closely resembling it, and are then termed cellulose. Hard, close-grained substance as the best ivory is, the friction which the balls undergo is so considerable that a set in constant use remains true but for a very short time, and requires to be frequently adjusted. We have all heard of the billiard sharp in the Savoy ballad, condemned for his iniquitous practices in purgatory to play,

> On a spot that's always barred;
> On a cloth untrue,
> With a twisted cue,
> And elliptical billiard balls.

It is probable that a very large percentage of innocent players do also play with elliptical balls, or at least balls that are anything but perfect spheres; for the proprietor of some first-class rooms once assured the writer that so few of the players frequenting his rooms knew whether the balls were really round or not, that he had to keep but one perfectly true set by him, in case such should be demanded by some casual expert dropping in.

There is, I suppose, no game in which so wide a disparity exists between the professional and the amateur as in billiards. Whereas the Gentlemen frequently beat the Players at cricket,

and can always make a match of it; and whereas it would take an uncommonly smart waterman's crew to get away from a good college boat; while even at tennis and racquets the thoroughly skilled amateur is to a certain extent 'in it' with the professor; yet at billiards the best amateur has no sort of chance with even a fifth-rate professional. Of all the imbecilities displayed by a notorious specimen of that strange product of civilisation known as the 'plunger,' whose instructive memoirs have been lately given to the public, perhaps the most remarkable was the fond idea, which he assures us he honestly entertained, that he could beat a very celebrated professional player at pyramids! This immense disparity is obvious at a glance; for whereas the highest professional break (spot-barred) is, if I remember rightly, the 690 made the year before last by Roberts, there are very few amateurs who can make a sixth, or even a seventh, part of that number.

Between the performances of professionals themselves in what are called the 'spot-barred' and the 'all-in' games there is a similar disparity, some enormous scores having been lately made in matches wherein the spot stroke has been allowed. Peall last year, playing at the Westminster Aquarium, made a break of 2,416, which beat his previous record by three points; while a few days later the same player eclipsed this stupendous score by a run of 3,304, this marvellous break occupying him no longer than two hours and forty minutes.

A considerable contention has arisen among devotees of the game as to which player, Peall or Roberts, is more properly entitled to the distinction of champion. But I think there must at present be no question as to this. However we may be more inclined to admire the famous all-round player, whose consummate skill yet keeps all younger aspirants at bay, so long as the game remains intact, with the spot stroke an integral part of it, a sense of ordinary fairness would seem to oblige us to admit that a player who can win by means of it is more entitled to the honour than one who requires a certain legitimate stroke to be barred in his favour. Nevertheless, as someone has remarked, 'life is monotonous already, without the spot stroke; and to watch a man make several hundred consecutive spots is a dreary business, about as amusing as to watch a horse go round in a mill.'

No one who has not tried it can have any idea of the terrible amount of practice required to become proficient at this apparently simple stroke. One of the best exponents of it owed his skill to the interest of a sporting farmer, who promised him when

a boy a crown every time he made forty consecutive spots; to earn which the lad would rise early and practise the stroke by the light of a tallow candle-end stuck by its own grease to the rim of the table of a village inn. With such indefatigable students it is possible that, being by incessant practice reduced to a certainty, the spot stroke will presently have to be definitely and absolutely barred, and, like the beautiful and delicate quill or 'feather' stroke, will become obsolete.

The most probable means of accomplishing this would be by an alteration in the position of the spot upon the table; yet there would be an obvious risk in tampering with either the table or the game. Other strokes might be practised and developed to such a degree as to become wearisome to the onlooker. The game as it stands is a sufficiently interesting one to the amateur player, who very rarely can afford either time or patience to acquire so much dexterity on the spot as to become a burden to his friends. But the professional nowadays is deemed of so much importance, that if he can amuse his patrons better on one kind of table than another, we may look to see it altered to suit his and their pleasure. Already the Billiard Association has invited the chief makers to send in patterns and designs for an improved table. It is curious, by the way, to behold how in these modern days the professional in various branches of sport has risen in consideration. From the menial position of groom or marker the successful jockey or cueist has become the pet of the public, and earns an income equal to, or greater than, that of a bishop or eminent pleader at the Bar.

In the play of amateurs there has of late been considerable improvement, owing doubtless to the inauguration of an amateur championship. In a comparatively recent match, in which the challenger, Mr. W. D. Courtney, beat Mr. A. P. Gaskell, the holder, three breaks were made of over a hundred, with several runs of over fifty—a distinct advance upon previous amateur form. Formerly, the competitions for the Universities' challenge cues were the chief amateur events, and these, as a rule, do not call forth more than very moderate talent, owing, perhaps, to the disfavour in which the game is not unreasonably regarded by college authorities; moreover the competitors are young, and with so many counter-attractions in the form of sports at which a purely athletic glory may be won, do not care to train for a mere indoor contest. Nevertheless, some very fine players have made their début, and as knights of the cue have won their spurs in these matches. The names of Lascelles, the two Rogers, Pontifex,

Adye, Douglas-Lane, and others, will readily occur to many old University men as those of quite first-class amateurs. It is a common experience to find army men playing a good game. They have every facility for practice, tables provided in every barracks, ample leisure in which to use them, and comrades at hand to play with; while again, among the *habitués* of club and hotel tables in provincial towns, may generally be found two or three who are no mean performers at this beautiful but difficult game. On the other hand, the country gentleman, so generally in the van in outdoor sports and pastimes, is commonly but an indifferent cueist. He lacks opponents, does not care for solitary practice, and often suffers a really fine table to become dull and sluggish for want of use and attention.

To speak as we did just now, of training, other than practice with the cue, in connection with a game like billiards, may sound to some ears incongruous. Nevertheless, it is the case that a moderate degree of physical training on the orthodox athletic lines gives the player, in a match or tournament, an indubitable advantage. A long game takes more out of the player than might be imagined, while a close finish is a severe strain upon the nerves; and these we know are largely dependent upon condition. A very good player, himself a winner of the 'Varsity Cue' and many matches, has assured me also that in his experience to smoke during a game is equivalent to giving twenty points in a hundred.

At no game, it is well known, is the incautious novice more likely to be swindled by the unscrupulous sharper than at billiards. The tricks of the billiard sharp are indeed many and various; and it is doubtful whether the tiro with a taste for betting is likely to fare worse at the hands of unscrupulous and needy markers, or at those of the quiet gentlemanly stranger whom he meets in a public room and challenges to a game. The invariable device, of course, is for the tempter to disguise by some means the actual superiority of his play, until he has established a wager that is worth the winning; and even then to win by the narrowest margin consistent with the safety of the bet. So cleverly was this once done by a notorious marker (who by the exercise of his talents earned for himself the significant sobriquet of 'Sam the Robber') in the case of a well-known amateur, that in a long sequence of play the professional, who began by requiring fifty points in two hundred, one fourth of the game, gradually demonstrated his ability to give those points, and thus by his artistic *finesse* won 200*l.* before the suspicion of his

antagonist, a really fine player with a considerable knowledge of sharpers and their little ways, was aroused. Needless to say our friend's experience was considerably augmented upon this occasion.

In our naval stations and seaport towns it is a not uncommon trick for a sharper to assume the garb and bearing of a mate or midshipman in the merchant service, in which guise he will enter a well-frequented billiard-room, and begin knocking the balls about in a frank and fluky sailor-like fashion until he gets a wager on his game; when, as will be readily imagined, his skill somewhat rapidly improves.

One deadly ruse is adopted to entrap a dupe of average intelligence. Suppose that Captain Rook engages Mr. Pigeon at the fascinating game of pyramids. Being immensely superior in skill the gallant captain chivalrously allows Pigeon to win the first game by one ball, and the second by two. Bully for P., who feels himself improving in his play and enters confidently on a third game, which the captain contrives to win by thirteen balls; when it is obvious that, the stakes being so much a ball, the captain will have secured a substantial gain on the three games. Moreover, the hapless Pigeon, having won two games out of three, still fancies himself rather the better player of the two, and is ready for another rubber at double the former stakes, to recoup himself for his previous loss. This is an artistic fleecing, but the surreptitious soaping of the tip of an adversary's cue (which has been known to be done) is but a low trick, and one which Captain Rook would very properly repudiate as unworthy of an officer and a gentleman.

Although billiards is one of the most difficult games at which to excel, involving as it does qualities of hand, eye, nerve, and judgment, yet a painstaking student soon acquires sufficient skill both to enjoy the game and avoid making himself a spectacle to lookers-on. His first business should be to acquire a knowledge of 'strength,' to attain which the tutor often requires the neophyte to play with a single ball, striking it until he can bring it after impact with one or more cushions to a given position; then this should be repeated with two balls, the position of each at the termination of their course being carefully noted. Tables vary very considerably in pace, according to the quality of the cushions, and the degree of care with which they and the cloth are tended; a fast table being more easy as well as pleasanter to play upon than a sluggish one. Probably the immense superiority of the professional, before alluded to,

consists rather in his completer knowledge of strength than in either his greater command of side or his larger *répertoire* of strokes. Indeed, the better the player, the simpler as a rule will be his game. He plays for the leave quite as much as for the immediate stroke, and therefore seldom attempts what we may term 'gallery' shots, unless there is absolutely nothing else to play for; even then he will choose more often to give a judicious miss. It is a common question for one amateur to ask another, 'What is your biggest break?' And the answer will probably be, 'Well, I have made twenty-five,' or thirty, as the case may be; whereas, perhaps, neither of them has ever made a break at all, properly so called. For what we understand by a 'break' in billiards is not merely a fortuitous series of cannons and hazards, but rather a deliberate sequence of such strokes, the position in which the balls are to be left having been approximately calculated before the making of each individual stroke; in other words, the subsequent stroke should not be left to chance, but so far as possible be carefully provided for beforehand. It is in this way, more than in the actual making of the strokes, that amateurs learn so much to improve their play by watching the exhibition matches now so much in vogue. Somewhat may be learned also from the cues with which these are played. If you were to take one of them in your hand you would find it to be of a good weight, and with a fair-sized top. A common error into which the amateur (especially if a smart neat-handed man, or a lady who can play a bit) is apt to fall, is to prefer a very light cue with a fine tip. Everybody will probably play better with a moderately heavy cue with a broadish tip. The writer of this article remembers good old Dufton during some lessons taken—*eheu fugaces anni!*—advising him to keep on increasing the weight of his cue, the fourteen-ounce one with which he was then playing being considered by the expert far too light. One is very apt to imagine that he can put more side on his ball with a fine-tipped cue; but this is not really the case; while the heavier cue is more steady, and with it one can really play more lightly, using 'less stick,' as the phrase goes. The cue should never be allowed to stand against the wall in the corner of a room, but be always suspended in the rack when not in use; and the tip should occasionally be rubbed lightly with fine glass-paper, to remove the grease which will otherwise prevent the chalk from properly adhering. Cues, it might be imagined, derive no peculiar efficiency or virtue from having belonged to persons of exalted rank; but a marker at Oxford used evidently to think otherwise,

for every term he would sell to confiding freshmen cues that had been left at his rooms by the Duke of Ditchwater.

Billiards, requiring neither great strength nor severe physical exertion, is essentially a ladies' game, and ladies not infrequently play a very pretty, if seldom a very strong, game. Nowhere, save perhaps on the ice or side-saddle, does a fine feminine form show to more advantage than when gracefully posed over a billiard-table, and nowhere do white arms gleam brighter than in the full flood of light deflected from shaded lamps upon the board of green cloth. 'Let us to billiards,' says Cleopatra, bored to death in the absence of her royal lover; and how many a weary hour in country houses, when the rain it raineth every day, and miry roads are ankle deep in mud, precluding out-door exercise, may be so lightened for the ladies of to-day!

What mirth and fun too obtain when the house-party meet at night in the well-appointed billiard-room for a game of 'shell-out' or 'cork-pool,' what time the bitter frost hardens the lawns without, while within, the huge logs roar on the wide hearth, casting many a flickering gleam on the massive mahogany or oaken table, and the cheerful click of the ivory balls, mingled with the sound of happy voices, vibrates in the warm lamp-lit air. Then even my Lady Dowager takes a cue and joins in the merry shout which greets the discomfiture of some young man who hugely fancies his play, as his ball, after missing the cork by the fraction of an inch, careers gaily round the table, and amid inextinguishable laughter subsides in a bottom pocket.

Private billiards must always remain an aristocratic and exclusive game, the great expense of its accessories preventing it from becoming a popular amusement. But this need never be the case with the public room. How often has the tedium of barrack life been relieved by the social game of pool, or even by the interesting endeavour to perform some special stroke in solitary practice! Who will not sympathise with the little band of British officers quartered at a lonely frontier station, when, as happened on a certain occasion, their long-expected table, after travelling for months about northern India, and turning up at every place but the right one, arrived at last, with its slate bed broken in three places!

At the village reading-room too, the working-man's club, what a valuable adjunct is the secondhand table procured by the energetic secretary, with the help of subscriptions from the parson and squire! So far from being prejudicial to the morality of the village, it exhibits quite an opposite tendency; the game, played

under proper regulations, invariably inculcating lessons of fair-play, courtesy, and restraint of temper, invaluable to the uncultured mind, generally lacking in such discipline; while its counter-attraction to the allurements of the drinking bar are well known to every curator of the morals of youth.

Whatever, if anything definite, may be the result of the present stir in the billiard world arising from the spot-stroke complications, there seems to be every chance of the game at last taking its due place in social esteem as the one (though always far behind whist and chess in point of intellectual pretensions) in which science, manual skill, and bodily exercise are in the highest degree combined, and also one which, apart from the accidents of gambling and cheating which have unjustly clouded its reputation, is in itself entirely free from anything to offend the most fastidious critic. Hitherto, the game has been too much in the hands of the professional and his patrons, but much is to be hoped from the establishment of an amateur championship, which we trust may be the means of long upholding the integrity of billiards, and of finally dispersing the unsavoury aroma which for so long has pervaded the moral atmosphere and obscured the genuine merits of a very noble pastime.

THE HERDS OF PROTEUS

BY THE HON. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY

I WELL remember when I was counsel before a committee on a railway bill in the House of Commons—a scheme for improving the communication with the West Highlands—the amusement with which I listened to one piece of evidence given on behalf of the promoters. Of course the traffic was to be enormous; 'feuing' on a large scale was to cover the barren hills with desirable residences; tons of herrings for the poor and lobsters for the rich were to increase the food-supply of the metropolis; millions of roofing slates from Easedale and Carnbaan were to cover mansions and cottages from Land's End to John o' Groat's; and lastly—and this was what particularly tickled my fancy—it was probable that there would be a large importation of seals from the western lochs and the Hebrides! The witness believed, or let us charitably hope so—at any rate he wished the committee to believe—that nothing but the want of railway communication prevented the City magnates from supporting native industry by buying the acres of sealskin which covered their own bow-windows, and the even more ample proportions of their wives, from shippers in Argyleshire; and that all danger of a quarrel with America or Russia over disputed rights to the seals at Alaska would come to a natural end by the simple process of the cessation of the demand for the foreign article. Who knows whether, if that abortive scheme had only become law, Reuben Paine and Tom Hall, the heroes of Rudyard Kipling's 'Rhyme of the Three Sealers,' might not have been alive to this day! I pricked up my ears at once. I did not then know as much about gradients, curves, and engineering difficulties as I do now,

but I did know something—probably more than any man in the room—about the natural history of the West Coast; and I wondered how many truck-loads of seals were to be brought up to London in the course of the year, and, if any were brought, what in the world would be done with them. Certainly a waistcoast made of pelt of the British harp seal or of that of one of his rarer compatriots would look more peculiar than becoming; and although the fishermen and crofters are glad of his blubber for lighting and other purposes, in these days of gas and electric light it would hardly pay to export it to the great metropolis.

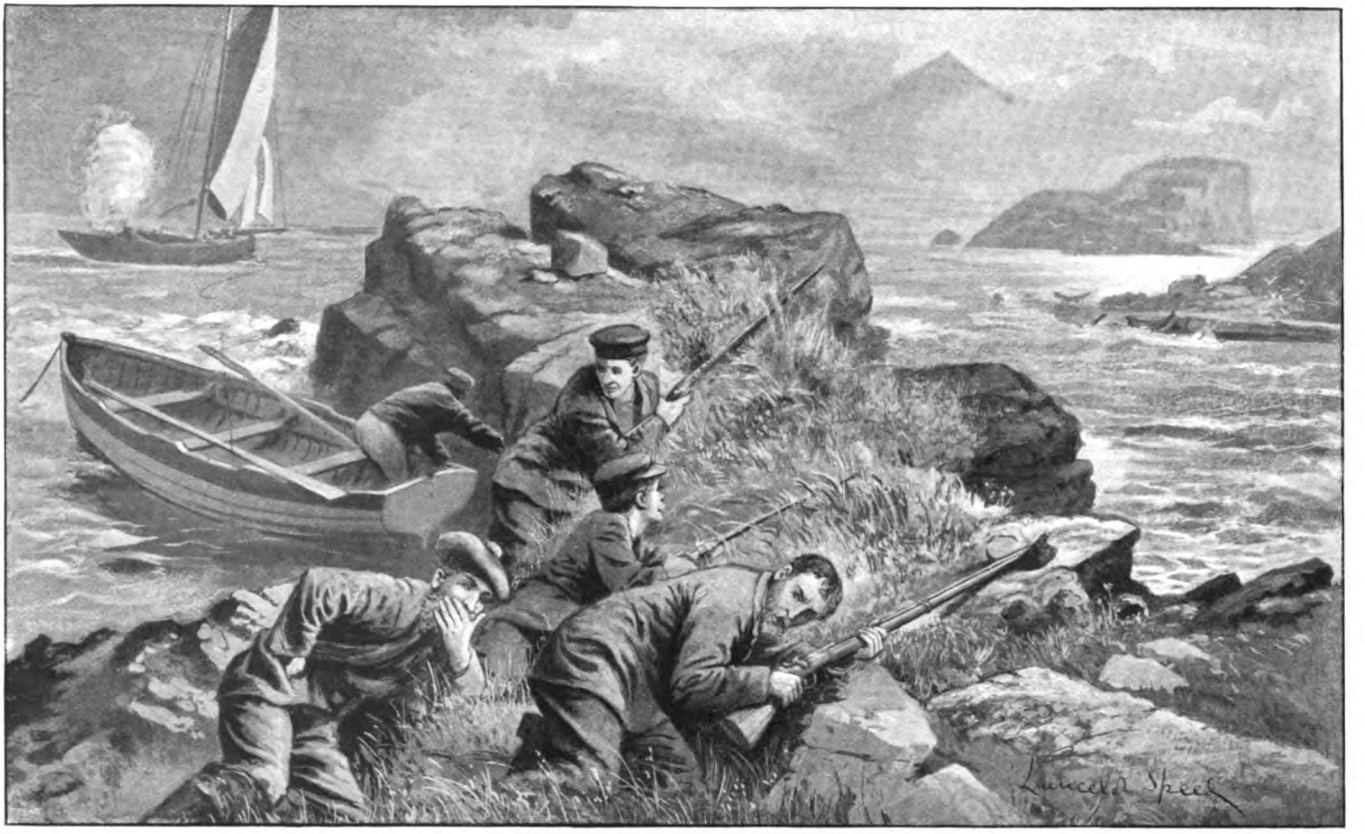
I need hardly point out to the intelligent reader that seals, although they are to be found on the West Coast if you know where to look for them, are not so common as the expert witness appeared to suppose. My personal experience dates back for more than a generation, and although many autumns have been spent in a locality peculiarly favourable for the purpose, the number of seals I have bagged could be counted on the fingers of my two hands. True it is that as I have grown older the sporting mania has somewhat yielded to the more humane instincts of the observer and naturalist, and that for some years I have enjoyed watching seals when on my various dredging, yachting, and fishing expeditions without any desire to take their lives. Yet, although I protest against the useless slaughter of any living creature, I cannot hold the killing of seals as unjustifiable, as they are certainly most mischievous and destructive at the mouths of the salmon rivers; their bodies are covered with a considerable quantity of valuable blubber, and although their pelts are not adapted for the manufacture of mantles and waistcoats, they make excellent gun covers, or nice mats mounted as sporting trophies. I leave it to others, however, to thin their dwindling numbers, and I should not publish my experiences if I thought I was assisting their extinction by revealing their hiding-places. For various reasons they have shifted their ground from time to time, and those who now visit Loch Craignish in the hope of repeating my successes will probably meet with disappointment.

My earliest acquaintance with seals was made in my undergraduate days in the neighbourhood of Valentia, on the west coast of Ireland. There I first saw their round, dog-like heads protruding from the water, and I borrowed a Snider rifle from the coastguard and fired sundry ineffectual shots at them. Finding this unavailing, I next visited the rock cave, afterwards described by Trench in his 'Reminiscences,' and swam in about

a hundred yards from the narrow entrance with a lighted candle in my hat and a club slung to my wrist in the hope of finding some seals at rest on the shelving beach at the end, and encountering and vanquishing them in single combat. Looking backwards in the light of experience, I am not so sure that it was to be regretted that the enemy was 'not at home;' for, as Monkbarns says, in the 'Antiquary,' of the *Phoca*, 'They bite like furies;' and, attired as I was in a hat and nothing more, in a place where all retreat was cut off from the seals, I might have come off even worse than Hector M'Intyre did in his celebrated encounter.

When next I saw a seal in his native element the scene had shifted to the west coast of Scotland, and I was one of a party assembled on the rocks at Duntroon, on a very hot Sunday in August 1867. We had been to church in the morning, and had broken the Sabbath in the afternoon by a delicious plunge into the clear water, and were now lazily sunning ourselves on the rock, from which in those days the stake-nets extended far into the bay. There on the glassy surface appeared the head of a large seal. We were a somewhat noisy party, and very conspicuous with our white towels, but the seal swam straight towards us, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left. He knew it was Sunday just as well as we did—as almost every kind of wild animal does—and he literally approached within thirty yards of us, and in another minute we could see the corks of the net shaking as he explored its meshes in the hope of getting a salmon without the trouble of hunting it. This was more than we could stand, and we pelted him with stones till we 'made him leave that.'

This sight renewed in me the desire to get the skin of a seal of my own killing, and I confided my wish to my good-natured host, then as always desirous that every guest should enjoy the sport which pleased him best. The keepers were consulted, and reported that seals in large numbers frequented a rock opposite the Goat Island in Loch Craignish, and that it would not be difficult by landing on the far side and crawling cautiously to the top to get a good shot. Three days afterwards the tide was reported to be suitable, and we set sail in the 'Troich Dhu' (Black Dwarf), a little half-decked yacht of five tons, with rifles borrowed from our host, determined that this time at least we would obtain the coveted trophy. I do not dwell upon all the incidents of the voyage; suffice it to say that after a long beat to windward we duly arrived on the outside of the island, and, after



A PORTENTOUS BANG AWOKE THE ECHOES FOR MILES AROUND

anchoring our little craft, rowed off in the dingey, and effected a cautious and noiseless landing at a somewhat difficult point just opposite the rock where we hoped to find the seals. Should we toss up or draw for first shot? No, that would give but a poor chance to number two, as the seals were not likely to wait for a second barrel. So, after some discussion, we agreed to crawl up side by side, each select a victim, and fire at the word of command—one—two—three. I am not sure now that such an arrangement was very likely to be successful, but it was the only means of reconciling the claims of two sportsmen at one and the same stalk. Cautiously we climbed up the steep side, and then, regardless of scratches and running water, crawled along side by side towards the point from which we hoped to obtain an easy shot. We were almost on the sky-line, and in another minute we should have been resting ourselves and selecting our prey, when a portentous bang awoke the echoes for miles around, and we rushed, hoping against hope, to the edge, only to see the rings in the calm water round the rock which clearly denoted that several seals had actually dived off, and that but for that horrid explosion our manœuvre would have been completely successful. I draw a veil over our sensations as we waited for some time watching the black heads bobbing up, as inquisitive seals asked with inquiring eye why someone had made such a beastly row and disturbed their midday siesta. We fired a few ineffectual shots at long ranges, but our chance was over for the day, and we returned wrathful and meditating vengeance to find out who or what had spoilt our sport, and whether it had been done by accident or design. Imagine our disgust when we saw Mr. Pender's yacht under sail in the offing, and found out that the skipper had saluted the flag of our little vessel, intending it, in his innocence, as a graceful compliment! Lucky for the crew that we carried no cannon either for purposes of annoyance or defence, or I believe we should have pursued and engaged and sunk them, or perished in the attempt.

Years passed before I secured my first seal. During the interval I shot at their heads from a boat more than once, and sometimes at a reasonable distance, but I never got one. The ball always seemed to strike near them—sometimes I could almost have sworn that I struck the very spot, and tried to persuade myself that I had hit my mark—but I do not really believe I ever shot one. A seal usually makes his appearance when you least expect him, and it is not an easy thing to snatch up your rifle and get a good shot at him before he is down again,

If he has been up any time, it is ten to one that he is watching you, and that he will duck the flash; and with both boat and seal in motion it is not easy to take an accurate aim.

However, a day came at last when I fired a successful shot from the gig between old Poltalloch and Eil-an-righ, and although the seal disappeared, the reddened water showed clearly enough that the shot had struck home. I feared he was lost; but in a few minutes he rose to the surface about sixty yards further off, and we pursued him in the boat, his dives growing shorter and shorter each time he rose. At last we approached sufficiently near him to drive a long trident-shaped barbed fish-spear into his body, and we had almost got him to the side of the boat, when he gave a convulsive struggle, twisted the strong triple barbs almost into the shape of fish-hooks, and once more dropped off into the deep water. I feared that he was lost to me after all, but this was his last effort, and when he rose again we were able to secure him with the spear and lift him on board. The skin was mine at last, but sadly spoiled by the wounds inflicted by the barbs in his struggle to get off.

I pause for a moment in my narrative to discuss the vexed question whether a seal shot in the water invariably sinks. The experience I have just stated is one instance to the contrary; but I should hesitate to dogmatise from a single case, although I think that others, and those often the most positive, are not equally cautious. I am convinced that it is impossible to lay down any definite rule. I have known a shot seal to sink immediately. I have known one to float for some time, and to go down gradually, just disappearing below the surface as the boat got within an oar's length of him; while others have floated for half an hour or more, like logs, and have gradually been driven ashore by the wind or tide. I am quite unable to account for the difference. It cannot be the situation or nature of the wound, as it is next to impossible to hit a seal in the water anywhere but in the head, which is the only part exposed. My opinion, for what it is worth, is that it depends upon the condition of the animal's lungs—whether or not they happen at the time to be sufficiently filled with air to float him; but it is always uncertain, and by far the most satisfactory mode of getting a seal is to shoot him on a rock, or else in sufficiently shallow water to make it easy to recover him even in the event of his sinking.

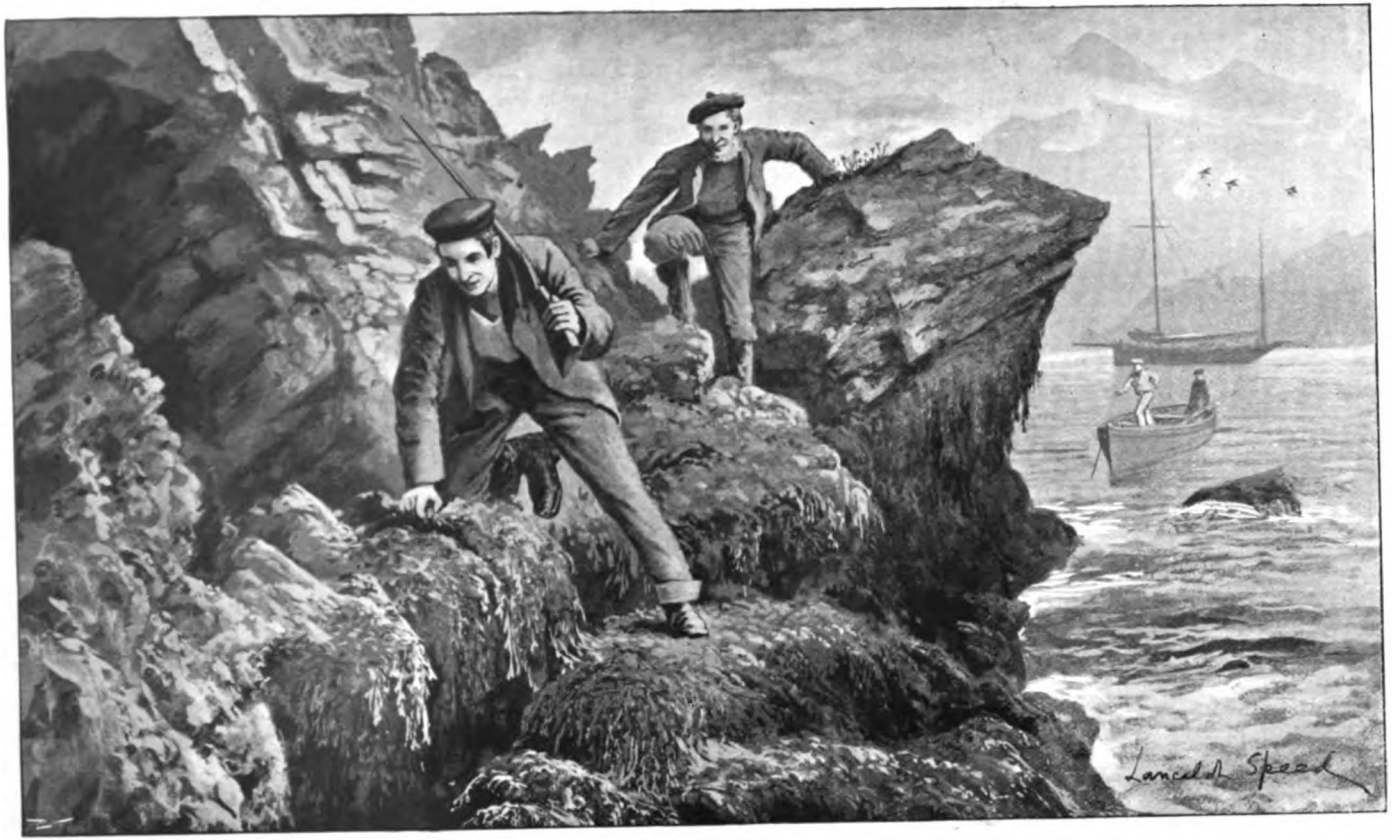
Of course the most exciting sport with seals, as with all other game when it is possible, is a legitimate stalk. To spy your

I SHOT AT THEIR HEADS FROM A BOAT

beast from a distance, to make a long détour, making due allowance for wind, approach under cover of rock or bushes, and kill your seal so dead that he never hears the shot that struck him, is sport indeed worthy of the name. The places, however, where seals can be got in this manner are few and far between. They usually choose secluded rocks unapproachable from land, and, sleepy as they look, are off like lightning at the slightest sound of oars or footsteps. I used, however, to know at least two places where at a low spring tide seals were almost certain to be found reposing on a sunny day, and where I have had several successful expeditions. One was off the mainland, just where the rugged cairns of Benan tower above Loch Craignish, where a flat rock, only dry at low water, afforded a favourite resting-place for these amphibious creatures, so graceful in the water, so awkward and clumsy-looking on shore. There I have frequently watched, and at least once stalked and secured them; but, until the island opposite was inhabited and the farmhouse occupied, a more sure find was a cluster of long rocks about a hundred yards outside it, which at a suitable tide was almost certain to have quite a colony of tenants. In that farmhouse nearly a century ago a certain Miss Minnie, a distant connexion of the house of Malcolm, had lived and flourished, monarch, not of all she surveyed, for the prospect was somewhat extensive, but at least supreme in her little kingdom. A solitary place, not suited for lovers of society, but not without its attractions and charms for the student of nature. After Miss Minnie's decease, the farmhouse being deserted and the ferry disused, the seals took possession of these rocks on each side, which were far up the loch and seldom disturbed; but recently the farm has been let again with an adjacent island, the house once more echoes with human voices, and the traffic with the mainland is renewed, so the poor seals have been evicted from some of their last refuges without compensation for disturbance.

Dear, beautiful Loch Craignish! How many happy days can I remember on its surface! As Macallum and Sandy pull us round from Duntroon the dredge is on board, and the ladies' sketch-books, as well as a substantial luncheon basket; but it is a low spring tide, and the ostensible objects of our expedition are seals and oysters. The latter, alas! are now few and far between, but some may be secured at the deadest low water sticking to the rocks, and, if so, what an addition they will make to our lunch! No germs of typhoid can lurk in the clear sea water, and one old fellow has five times as much flesh on him as the

degenerate native of the South, and three times as much flavour. On we go, inside Rabbit Island, past the point of Ardifure, and round under the shore of Macaskan, still inhabited by fallow deer, with one solitary herd and his family to look after them. Sandy, the youngest of our boatmen, is in his own country now, for he is a son of that very herd; and many a morning have he and his brother and sister crossed the loch, and tramped two miles across the hill on their way to the school at Kilmatin, a sample of pursuit of knowledge under difficulties which accounts for the superior education of the Scotch in bygone days. Next we pass the unused limekiln, which the ladies formerly used as a dressing-room when enjoying a dip—one, I remember, complained bitterly of a cow having fallen into her dressing-room—and so on past Goat Island (no longer a haunt of seals) to Eil-an-righ. As we pass along, the fern and the ripening rowan berries glitter in the sun, the buzzard soars round the peak above, heron and gull flap lazily past, screaming terns hover and plunge into the water, rising with glittering herring fry in their beaks. Curlews and oyster-catchers run along the shores, and the hooded crows too are busy among the seaweed. Cormorants spread out their wings, drying themselves on the rocks; while we are accompanied by a perfect convoy of guillemots, swimming and diving around us fearless of harm. More than one seal has shown his head within shot of us, and after a prolonged stare lifted his nose in the air and disappeared, to break the water again perhaps three hundred yards off, perhaps a mile; but we are not tempted to fire till we have explored the rocks. The glassy surface looks as if it could never be ruffled, but appearances are deceptive, and it is not a nice place to be attempted by unskilled boatmen or with fastened sheet. Like all Highland lochs under high hills, it is very subject to squalls, which sweep down with extraordinary suddenness and great violence. But our boatmen are both capable and cautious; to-day, however, there is no need for their skill or care, for we pursue our course under a sapphire sky till we reach the landing-place at Eil-an-righ. Some of the party stop by the beautiful spring, in its nest of hart's tongue and lady fern, surrounded by boulders covered with moss and hymenophyllum, while I and two of the ladies go up the path to spy the rocks. No need of caution here, as we are more than half a mile off, so we seat ourselves on a boulder and carefully spy. Sure enough there are four seals on the nearest rock: one or two wriggling and twisting their heads and tails round in awkward and ungainly attitudes, one large dark fellow lying perfectly still



HIS SKIN IS MINE

with his head turned towards the shore. I carefully mark the exact spot, and, leaving the others to watch, take my single-barrelled Henry out of its case and start off on my stalk. It is easy enough to get within three hundred yards. Up to that point I have shelter, and cover of rock, hazel, and birch; but just below are a flock of wild ducks, and if I put them up good-bye to my seals. Another round and I come to a little burn, which finds its way into the sea just at the nearest point to the seal rock. It is wet, it is slippery, it is uncomfortable, but no matter —I crawl along, often in a pool of water, till I find myself at a point hardly more than a hundred yards from my objective. I pause to take breath, then slowly and cautiously raise my head. There they are still, and my dark friend is motionless in the same attitude. I rest my left hand on the rock, my rifle on my left hand, take a steady aim, and pull. There is a smoke, a splash, several splashes, as the seals flop heavily into the water, but when the smoke clears away my dark friend is still lying there in the same attitude, absolutely motionless, a thin stream of blood flowing from his throat just below the nose. The ball has caught him fair this time, and his skin is mine. Splashing, sliding, and jumping, I find my way across the sand and boulders through the shallow water; but there is no need to hurry—the dark seal never moves again.

After this success oysters sound an unromantic object of pursuit; but we get a few, and enjoy them as a relish to our picnic. The seal is handed over to Hugh Gillies, the herd, to skin, and he is well pleased to do it, as the flesh and blubber become his perquisite. I should not care to eat seal myself, but Esquimaux like it, and Macallum and Sandy assure me it is very like veal.

We dredge with varied success while the skinning is going on, and then, as a light breeze springs up, for once from the right quarter, we return home under sail. Behind us, as we turn into Loch Crinan, the sky over the whirlpool between Jura and Scarba is flooded with molten gold and purple, and the sun has sunk behind the islands before our party lands, after a day for ever to be marked with a white stone.

CRICKET IN THE WEST INDIES

BY P. F. WARNER

ENGLISH elevens nowadays go over to all parts of the world to play the great national game, and meet good cricketers, moreover, in the most unexpected places. The West Indies, however, is comparatively a new field, and as I had the pleasure and privilege of being a member of the team which lately visited the islands, I have ventured to think—and the Editor agrees with me—that a brief article about our experiences might be of interest.

Cricket in the West Indies attains a far higher standard than people in England imagine. Especially is this so in bowling and fielding, a high level of excellence being attained in these departments of the game. The natives of the islands are very fine natural cricketers, being possessed of supple wrists and shoulders, and able to throw a long distance. Perhaps the two best bowlers we met during the tour were natives, viz. Woods and Cumberbatch, while Constantine is a capital bat and wicket-keeper. The amount of interest taken in the game in the West Indies is extraordinary. During our visit the community seem to have gone cricket mad. On our way to the grounds we were continually greeted with shouts of 'Success! Success! England for ever!' and I am not sure that they did not imagine that we were the best eleven England could put into the field. Lord Hawke was a special source of wonder; the people never seemed to understand a 'live lord' playing cricket. 'Steady, my lord!' was a frequent cry from the ropes. In Trinidad, Cumberbatch, the great native bowler, was offered five dollars by the Attorney-General of the island if he dismissed Lord Hawke for a duck. 'Very well, sir, it shall be done' was the reply of the local hero, and sure enough Lord Hawke's middle stump was seen reclining on the ground before the Yorkshire captain could claim a single run! When we were

meeting the Queen's Park Cricket Club in Trinidad, the home team had an uphill game to play, and 'Courage, Queen's Park!' was a not unusual cry. At Barbados we met a most amusing person called 'Britannia Bill.' He was a staunch supporter of Lord Hawke's team, and carried with him a Union Jack which he waved enthusiastically whenever the fortunes of the match varied in our favour. When we were leaving Barbados for British Guiana a successful member of the team was greeted on the wharf by this same gentleman with the following remark: 'That you may never get out in Demerara is the wish of Britannia Bill.' The cricketer in question was so pleased that he promptly gave him a shilling. St. Vincent, too, was most amusing, many of the batsmen paying very little attention to the decisions of the umpire. As a member of the side very aptly put it, 'the centre ash had to be absolutely felled' before a batsman would think of retiring without a protest. A somewhat amusing story is told of the Oxford captain, G. R. Bardswell. When he went in for his second innings he expressed his intention of remaining at the wickets for the rest of the day, as he felt in such good form. He ordered a whisky-and-soda to be ready for him at 5.30 (the time for drawing stumps), but alas for the uncertainty of the great game, he only received one ball, and that proved his last. 'What a funny game cricket is!' was his only remark as he left the wickets. In this match, too, Lord Hawke was unfortunate enough to get a duck in his first innings, being bowled by Layne, a black man, amidst a scene of indescribable excitement. When Lord Hawke went in for his second innings the bowler was exhorted by the crowd to 'give the lord a duck,' but this time the Yorkshire captain made no mistake, and put together an excellent fifty-one, including two hits for six each. In Trinidad I was lucky enough to get a century, but in the next island we played (Grenada) I only made four, and on my way back to the pavilion was greeted with shouts of 'Where is your hundred, sir?' The cricket grounds attain a very fair level of excellence, and in Trinidad, Barbados, Antigua, and Demerara we had really splendid wickets, though in Barbados and Trinidad the ball showed a distinct inclination to jump a bit. In our second match at Barbados we had a most exciting finish—we eventually proved successful by four wickets just on the stroke of time. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower and myself happened to make a very useful stand at a critical point, and we were encouraged by the natives shouting 'You are little men, but you play well.' As regards the climate, we all concluded that it had been much maligned. We kept in the best of health out

there (though more than one of the team had a little fever on the ship coming home), and the sun though very hot is by no means injurious if ordinary precautions are taken. White sun-hats, and a handkerchief round the neck, are nearly always worn when playing. Trinidad and Demerara are undoubtedly the hottest, but Barbados is a splendid climate, as a pleasant sea breeze is always blowing. The scenery is in almost every case beautiful and varied; Trinidad, Dominica, and St. Lucia are especially striking, the last-named island possessing one of the finest harbours in the world. The entrance is somewhat narrow; the hills that rise sheer out of the water are admirably suited for fortifications. Large barracks are being constructed, and the defences of the island are extremely strong, so much so, indeed, that St. Lucia has been called the 'Gibraltar of the West.' Trinidad is famous for its Pitch Lake, which covers an area of 110 acres; in Dominica (perhaps the most beautiful island in all the West Indies) are to be found some sulphur springs and a really magnificent waterfall.

As to which was the best eleven we encountered opinions differ—some thinking Barbados, while others prefer the Trinidad representatives. For my own part I consider Trinidad the best side, their bowling being especially strong. Woods and Cumberbatch, the two Trinidad bowlers, are really excellent, and quite good enough to play for any English county. Woods bowls fast right-hand with rather a low and swinging action, and every now and again breaks the ball back considerably from the off. Cumberbatch is right-hand rather over medium, and varies his pace well. The fielding all round is A1, while the batting is very fair, D'Ade being much the best. Barbados possess undoubtedly the finest batting side in the West Indies, every man in the team being capable of making a good score, and in Clifford Goodman they possess a fine bowler. Goodman stands 6 ft. 3 in., and brings the ball down from a great height. He is over medium pace, and, keeping an excellent length, gets considerable work on the ball from the off side. Against Mr. Priestley's eleven he met with astonishing success, and Mr. A. E. Stoddart, the famous Middlesex batsman, has a very high opinion of his abilities. On anything like a sticky wicket he is almost unplayable, as he makes the ball get up very straight from the pitch. Demerara did not show their best form against us, but they undoubtedly have several excellent cricketers. In estimating the respective merits of Trinidad, Barbados, and Demerara, it must be borne in mind that Trinidad played natives (black men),

while Barbados and Demerara did not. In the Intercolonial Cup, which is played for every other year between the three above-mentioned places, black men are excluded, and Trinidad, thus deprived of her two great bowlers, is by no means so good as either of her opponents. In the smaller islands, such as Grenada, St. Vincent, Antigua, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, black men are always played. As a matter of fact, it would be impossible in these islands to raise a side without them, but Barbados and Demerara have strenuously set themselves against this policy.

With the attitude taken up by Barbados and Demerara I cannot agree. These black men add considerably to the strength of a side, their inclusion makes the game more popular locally, and tends to instil a great and universal enthusiasm among all classes of the population. Their inclusion, too, would enable the smaller islands to compete for the Intercolonial Cup, although I believe that the absence of these islands is mostly due to difficulty in the way of communication. The visit of a West Indian team to England within the next two or three years is by no means improbable, and there can be little doubt that a capital side could be got together if the black men were included. Without them it would be absurd to attempt to play the first-class counties, and a West Indian combination would derive no benefit whatever from playing against the second-class. The team should not arrive in England until June, so as to avoid the cold winds of early summer, which the black men of the team would naturally feel keenly. The team would be composed of nine or ten gentlemen and four or five professionals. To expect the team to beat Yorkshire or Surrey would be too much, but that they would make a good fight against the other counties I have little doubt. Of course, in expressing these views on the merits of the West Indian cricketers, it must be remembered that I am basing my statements on the fact that I saw them on their own grounds, and under climatic conditions quite different from those of the Old Country. Light, different wickets, and surroundings must no doubt be taken into consideration, but still I think the attempt would be well worth trying. A missed catch in the West Indies is very rare. Especially is this so with the black men. Their throwing is splendid, nearly all the cricketers we met being able to throw well, and many of them considerably over a hundred yards. The black men of any West Indian eleven that might visit England would doubtless prove a great attraction with the cricket-loving public, and I am sure that Goodman, Woods, Cumberbatch, and others would command the

respect of the best of English batsmen. In conclusion, I should like to say that Englishmen have the most erroneous ideas about the West Indies. They imagine them as the home of the centipede, the snake, and a thousand other terrors. For myself, I never saw any of these terrible things, with the exception of a snake in the wilds of British Guiana, and that was dead. Hotel accommodation is rapidly improving all over the West Indies, and in some places is quite excellent. Electric light, tramways, telephones, &c., are everywhere in use. The hospitality of the people is unbounded, and, everywhere meeting with the same cordial reception, we had the most delightful of times. That an English team will visit the West Indies every two years may be taken as certain, and the members of these future teams ought most certainly to enjoy themselves. Assuredly Lord Hawke's eleven took away with them most pleasant memories of the islands and the many charming people they met there.

BY J. F. SULLIVAN

I

THIS article is written for three men. The author has thought out the subject exhaustively, and has calculated, by an abstruse method known only to himself, that in these days, when the bicycle rules the land, there are just three Englishmen who still love to walk. It is to these three that, with the fervour of a hobbyist addressing his brother idosyncriacs, the author addresses himself: they are the choice minority.

Man, broadly considered, is not an animal who can walk. Of course, when I speak of man, I mean Englishman; for we naturally dismiss all foreigners from our thoughts, taking it as undisputable that no foreigner could ever possibly attempt to walk, not even the native of the Andes, nor the German student, nor the Swiss mountain guide.

The average Englishman has legs, but walks not; his legs are merely a means of catching trains or cabs or omnibuses. There are men who solemnly assure you that they *walk* to their office daily; and when you come to thresh it out, you find that the so-called 'walk' is a puny, pale, feeble thing of three, four, five miles! So, by a man who walks, I mean a man who regards the legs as the natural means of pleasurable locomotion; who walks in season and out of season—although I personally deny that there is an off-season for walking—walks everywhere it is necessary or

unnecessary to go, and any distance, and at any time of night or day, and in any weather, and in spite of the enervating

existence of such frivolities as trains, trams, coaches, and so forth.

I am one of these; and I fancy the idiosyncrasy has it original source in laziness.

Take it that I have wandered by eventide into the vicinity of a railway station just about the hour when one has to think of getting back to London for supper and bed. Do I take a train? No. I murmur to myself, 'I should have the trouble of looking at a time-table, or asking a porter to find out when the next train goes; very likely I should have a trouble in finding the time-table or the porter; and, besides, there is a trudge of at least fifty yards to the door of the station, and there are two steps at the door. It is much simpler to walk home—it's only a matter of fifteen or twenty miles, or, at the most, twenty-five, or a little over.' And I trudge off towards London, in pure lazy horror of difficulties. One of the things I most dread is having to wait for the train. I know men of so peaceful and patient a turn of mind that they can wait quite contentedly for a train for long periods—fifteen, twenty, nay thirty minutes! The assurance of a porter that the next train will not come for ten minutes falls like a thunderbolt upon me, and I gasp, 'What on earth shall I do for all that time?' and he replies, 'There's a jug of water and some advertisements in the waiting-room.'

The real walking-man is a man to know, to gain the acquaintance of by *any* effort or sacrifice, to cherish in spite of *any* incidental faults. He is so scarce! I know one; he is, of course, one of the three for whom I am writing this paper; the other two are strangers to me—just readers; but I long to know them.

The man I know is *not* a good man; in fact, his reputation is very shady; he is not a man whom I would trust with a sovereign in the way of business; he has no accomplishments apart from walking—save one, the accomplishment of being a companion with whom one *can* walk. He is not prosy nor preoccupied; he takes an interest in the objects passed on the road: the milestones, the gates, the heaps of flints, the pigs and poultry, the finger-posts, and the haystacks. One can be comfortable with him. He is congenial. If you say, 'I could do a drink;' he says, 'So could I.' If you remark, 'Let's quicken up and do the next five miles in the hour;' he replies, 'Yes; that's just what I was thinking.' If you say, 'We might as well have lunch when we reach Guildford;' he says, 'Right you are; *I* could do a steak.' He is, being a walking-man, always ready to tramp through mire, sleet, hail, thunder, fog, wind, darkness, or dust, and never *thinks* of trains. Then he is not an idiot; that is, he does not catch cold, nor get stiff, nor set up blisters. I am working up the scale of his desirable qualities, and have now reached the highest

level; he does not *toddle* nor fall out of step, but swings along with a regular undeviating four-mile-an-hour stride which spreads comfort all around him.

When he dies, I shall.

Have you ever walked with a man who toddles? He is torture! One *never* gets accustomed to his toddling; on the

contrary, the irritation of his toddle is cumulative, tiring one's body through the medium of one's mind; and such a man will weary you in a trifle of thirty or forty miles, and even sooner in fly-time. The man who toddles is the man who stops—stops to look at a pig, to tie his bootlace, to find his pipe, to read a finger-post; and this vice is nearly as maddening as toddling itself.

II

WHEN I was quite a young man—a walking-youth—I had a friend who also was a walking-youth. At that time we had no idea that we were walking-youths, never having had the enterprise to class ourselves; we were absolutely casual and walked by instinct. The following method of procedure was our normal and characteristic way.

One day T. (my twin walking-youth) dropped in after breakfast and said, 'What are you up to to-day?'

I replied, 'Nothing in particular. Let's go for a stroll.'

So we shut the street-door after us and started on our stroll; mechanically we dropped into the customary four-mile swing, and as mechanically went westward.

It was a lovely summer morning—a morning on which one floats along in the air, knowing nothing of feet or boots.

'We'll get back to lunch,' I said. 'It's steak and onions.' 'Right,' said T. (in a way I like). Kingston Vale and Kingston Hill floated by us, lovely and dusty; the blue river glittered by us along Kingston; the road blinded us with glare and dust to Esher; at Esher there were two good appetites, and bread and cheese to spoil them. Being walking-youths, we never sat down unless compelled by law or other emergency, so we ate our bread and cheese standing. After this we abandoned ourselves to absolute want of thought, the highest state of paradise to the walking-man.

It is unnecessary to think in order to absorb the loveliness of Fairmile Common, Cobham, and Boldemere Lake; but to relieve your feelings when overcome by the most delicious spots, you can grunt. The supreme-joy grunt is permissible to the walker. Guildford, with its quaint old-world High Street, its Abbot's Almshouses, and its Gothic Grammar School, we reached at 4.30 P.M.

'I'm pretty hungry!' said T.

'So am I,' said I. 'But we *ought* to get on to Godalming now we're here.'

'Right!' said T. (in the way I like).

There are few walker's joys greater than the duty of pushing on to somewhere else when he is just nice and hungry. It is a pity to spoil an appetite when it is really hardly quite ripe; it is a far, far happier thing to watch it growing mellow over a few more miles—to see the sun turning it to the hue of mellowness, until it becomes luscious and melts in your mouth!

So we refused to part with our beautiful appetites so cheaply to the first hotel holding out the lure of steak and onions. Guildford was frantic to take over our appetites, and the heads of the Red Lion, the White Lion, and the White Hart seemed to droop despairingly on their bosoms as we heroically passed, still in possession of our cherished hunger.

A mile out of Guildford we overtook a tramp. The true walker is always an expert in tramps, knowing at a glance which tramp is undesirable to speak to, and which other is good company. This tramp, as we saw at once from his back, was good company, and our conviction was strengthened when we spoke him. He was far from servile in manner; he was affable and genial; and we gained much amusement from him as we swung along, and some information. Providence rewards the walker with beautiful tramps, which she denies to the person who travels in a train. She has supplied me with tramps with a lavish and ungrudging hand; indeed, I have never had to pine for a tramp.

This particular tramp was well enough; but a far finer one was in store for us—a glorious tramp, of whom you shall hear anon. He presently departed, twopence the richer, down a byway, and we swung on until the streets of Godalming blazed at us. It was a broiling day, and Godalming on a broiling day is one of the broilingest towns I know.

'Better have that steak and onions here, instead of waiting until we get home,' we agreed, 'and then we can turn back and get in about ——'

It was too much trouble to calculate about what time we should get home. If we had worked it out, allowing for the steak and onions and the return journey of twenty-eight miles, the answer would have been, 'About 1.30 A.M.'

'Look here,' remarked T., after the steak and onions. 'Now we *are* here, it's a pity not to go on to Haslemere. Then we can turn back, you know.'

The ascent of Hindhead was humming in the declining sun of a late summer afternoon—the hottest sun of the day, as every walker knows.

We had now walked into that ineffably glorious swing which can only be attained after a tramp of many miles; that swing which is more like floating than walking, and which gradually quickens up mile by mile until on a good level road the walker is doing his good four and three-quarter miles an hour without any consciousness of accelerated pace, while an indescribable dreamy

calm reigns in his mind. Those alone who have experienced this evening swing can conceive the unutterable pleasure of it. I know of nothing like it.

After a long day of sculling on the river, in a good boat, with a companion whose time is perfect, and in conjunction with whom you have grown into a mere accurate well-oiled machine, you may enjoy a sensation akin to that of the evening swing; but it is not equal to it in satisfying delight.

So Hindhead and the far-extending views float by us, as though we were suspended in the midst of a moving panorama, we ourselves being wholly unconscious of muscular effort, until we are pulled up by the sudden arrival of the Royal Huts Inn, and then we awaken to the pace at which we have been climbing the ascent and traversing the plateau; and we sit down, wildly thirsty, and drink thirteen cups of tea apiece—that was the exact number.

'May as well go down into Haslemere now we *are* here?' say I. And we do; and then it occurs to us that we could eat just one more dinner.

'A bit late to start home now, isn't it?' says T. It is; our after-breakfast stroll has stretched out to forty miles; we are comfortably and luxuriously tired, and hardly feel equal to making it eighty miles; for even unreasoning walking-youthism has its limits.

So we go to bed at Haslemere, deciding to stroll home after breakfast next morning.

'Seems rather a pity to go toward town now we are here!' remarks T. after breakfast.

'Ye-es,' I reply. So we mechanically set off again—still westward.

On the fifth day the steak and onions are still waiting for us at Putney—unless someone has taken compassion on them and eaten them; and we have strolled as far as Glastonbury.

On the way we have collected things. Tooth-brushes were a necessity; we had agreed that nightgowns rendered sleep more comfortable, and had bought one each, attempted to find a pocket large enough to contain it, and finally carried it in brown paper; we had also acquired a brush and comb, new collars, new shirts, and pairs of socks. These we had put on, and were carrying our discarded shirts, socks, and collars, nightgowns, brush and comb, and tooth-brushes concealed about us in various pockets and brown-paper parcels.

'I say, this is precious uncomfortable!' said T. 'I vote we buy knapsacks.' And this improved things; but still our worn

shirts, collars, and socks preyed on our minds. We did not want the bother of carrying them over indefinite tracts of country, yet we hesitated to throw them away; and it was just when we were suffering from this state of mind that Providence provided a deliverer.

We were bathing in a bright pool in the heat of an afternoon; we stood up to our necks in water; and a few yards off stood a gentlemanly looking stranger up to *his* neck in water. He had flaxen hair and a long fair moustache, and altogether rather a distinguished appearance down to his chin. Casually we entered into conversation with him about the beauty of the weather, and we perceived him to be a genial and gentlemanly person; and presently he waded out, dried himself on a rag, dressed himself in the bundle of clothes he had left on the bank—all rags, and began to hobble away with the regulation tramp's lurch.

We glanced at each other with a great sigh of relief. Here was the man who would accept our cast-off linen, and save us the inexcusable prodigality of throwing it away.

I said before that the true walker is an expert in tramps; and instantly we knew this man to be of the species of tramp we loved. We had met several tramps with long fair moustaches, and had never yet been disappointed in them. This tramp was not haughty nor stand-offish, yet he was dignified. He accepted our companionship with courtesy and self-possession, and was communicative. He was an epicure.

He could not get on without his coffee, so attached to his belt beneath his coat he carried a small mustard-tin inside a larger mustard-tin, and on opening the inner tin one discovered a little packet of ground coffee—without chicory, mind you!

'I always have my drop of coffee, morning and evening,' he said; 'and when things are looking up a bit, I like a mouthful after lunch.' ('After lunch' were his words, as here set down.)

'But how do you manage to make your coffee?' we inquired.

'Oh, folks are very obliging,' he replied. 'They'll always give me a drop of hot water from the tea-kettle at the cottages; and when I can't get boiling water, I have my little spirit-lamp.' And he showed us how, in the larger mustard-tin (which had holes punched in it near the bottom), was a little spirit-lamp in working order. He had a number of treasures—a razor, with which he habitually shaved his chin, a comb, a briar pipe and his own independent screw of shag, a bit of broken mirror, some lumps of sugar in a paper bag, and a piece of soap. He was a very swell tramp indeed, and spoke good English; but he

accepted the linen we offered him, and relieved us of a great care. He had been everything, had this tramp: sailor, cabdriver, gamekeeper, poacher (of course), swimming instructor, roadman,

beadle, sexton, valet—he must have filled each capacity for about a week, by the number of callings. Anyhow, he was singularly well informed, and worth talking to.

Curiously enough, too, he not only did not beg, but actually refused a proffered sixpence, remarking that we had done enough for him. All tramps are not that way.

We had met three other tramps too; they had entered the tiny panelled room of the tiniest old inn we had ever known, the while we sat there ravenously devouring bacon. The room was so small that, when the five of us were all in it, together with the small table, and the fixed benches round the wall, a fly looked in, and, seeing no room for him, departed.

The tramps were two gentlemen and a lady. The elder of the two gentlemen took up his position in front of the wide fireplace, which was out of all proportion to the tiny room, placed his feet comfortably wide apart, and proceeded to survey us critically—from a two-foot range—all over.

He had no discernible nose, only a sort of pimple; one eye was shut up and the other a mere buttonhole; he had shaved a fortnight ago—or been shaved under compulsion; he was short and very thickset; his hands and face were grey with dirt; one foot had a red cotton bandage over the boot; he had a strip of sticking-plaster on his forehead—a forehead about one inch and a half high.

'I s'pose it ain't no good arstin' you gents for a drink?' he asked. He had the hoarsest voice in Great Britain.

'It isn't,' we replied.

'Nur a pipe o' backer?'

'Not a bit.'

Then the conversation flagged from inanition, and the tramp continued his silent survey.

'Now, I s'pose you're reg'lar swells, you gents?' presently inquired the elder tramp.

'Yes,' we replied.

This admission opened his heart to us, and he began to talk volubly and quite affectionately, laying his hand on my shoulder to show there was no ill-feeling.

He was very amusing, his career being full of interest. He told us that he was the black sheep of the family, and had very swell relations; one was head slaughterman to a big firm of butchers, with two pound a week; another a tallyman, as made a 'eap o' money by county-courting his customers who couldn't keep up their subscriptions; while his sister kept a fust-clarse fried-fish business at Mile End. There was heaps of money in the family, only he didn't get a smell of none of it.

He had come out a fortnight ago from three weeks with 'ard, and expected to be in again afore the end of that week because casual wards was going to the dogs and not worth patronising.

He'd just made arf a bull by selling a fine dorg—one of the

finest pugs as ever you set eyes on; but he did not say *whose* dorg. He had sold two dorgs the week before, and a goose, and several pairs of stockings, and a rake; he had done very well that week. He was evidently a general dealer.

He offered us several real bargains, too. He said, if we could do with some nice eggs, or a ferret, or a rattlin' silver dog-collar, he

could let us 'ave 'em cheap, as he knowed of 'em; but he couldn't say as we mightn't 'ave to wait as far as the eggs and ferret was concerned. He had been a horse-dealer, too, having sold a capital 'orse about five months ago for as much as a quid; that *was* a windfall, but 'orses was a bit scarce to git hold of.

There seemed to be few articles which he could not obtain at short notice, provided they were not in stock.

We all grew quite chummy, sitting at the table before the crackling wood on the hearth. To be sure, the fire was a little superfluous, for the day was summery enough, though wet; it had only been lighted for the accommodation of an immense saucepan of chilly temperament; but it was cheerful and dried one's clothes. So we divided our tobacco with the tramps, lady and all.

The lady was very funny about the tobacco. When T. offered her some, she sniggered shyly, as a duchess might do under similar circumstances.

(I do not state that the duchess would, having had no experience on the point.)

She was quite bashful, and I think she blushed beneath her grubbiness; but as we had long ago perceived the short black pipe sticking in the ribbon on her bonnet, we pressed her, and she finally accepted and joined us.

As we were leaving, T. said to the elder tramp, 'Now, if I stand you a quart, will you give the lady first drink?' And he replied, heartily, 'Ah, that I will; fust drink she shall 'ave, as a lady should.'

And so we tore ourselves away, and departed into the rain, feeling quite lonely and as though something had gone out of our lives.

Before we returned from that after-breakfast stroll we had strolled beyond Glastonbury, to Taunton, Exeter, and Plymouth; then we thought it time to turn back to look after that steak and onions. Of course, we had not started with anything like sufficient money for our unpremeditated stroll; and once or twice we were in choice difficulties by reason of remittances not turning up at post offices; and once we borrowed half a sovereign of a friendly (and very confiding) curate. We paid it back.

III

But the great and glorious happiness of being absolutely free and irresponsible; absolutely unencumbered by any trammels, such as luggage, bicycles, horses, engagements, destinations, or plans for the morrow!

The knapsack is no encumbrance, while its habit of conversing with its wearer makes it very good company. Your mere prosy non-walker would say that its conversational habits are the mere creaking of the shoulder-straps and wicker back. Pooh! I admit that, having learned a given phrase, it has a way of repeating it at each step until it cloys a little; but

then it never learns a rhythmless phrase—every phrase scans beautifully.

On the stroll I have alluded to my new knapsack began with, 'There's a dreadfully dusty road! There's a dreadfully dusty road!' Then it took to, 'Wasn't it windy on Salisbury Plain?' After that it grew slangy, and took up, 'Isn't it time for grub?' Knapsacks pick up a foreign language, too, with marvellous facility. This same one subsequently went for a walk with me in Normandy; and the first day out it got hold of, 'Chevaux de renfort, Chevaux de renfort.' It soon learned 'Mon Dieu! Ce maudit cidre, le cidre de Normandie!' Afterwards it continued to remark, 'Cinquante kilos make thirty miles.' The curious part of it was that the knapsack always put its phrases into English rhythm—thus '*Chev*-aux de *ren*-fort!' That was its insular way.

When it got to Italy it was in its glory, in consequence of the rhythm. Thus it would repeat, 'Questa via polverosa! Beviamo qualche cosa,' or 'Cento centesimi fanno la lira!' for hours at a stretch. It grew maddening there. It would pick up every phrase it overheard on the way, and keep it up until my brain reeled. I rejoice to say it could never learn German; that would have been too great a calamity.

Why, when one can be free, should one quixotically burden oneself with a bicycle just for the sake of showing the world to it? Why should one sacrifice one's interests to those of a train or a coach, simply because those vehicles have a vacant seat which cannot be content without an occupant?

It is just those very places you want to go to which coaches and things prevent your going to. How can you get over stiles, or walk along the edge of cliffs, or climb ruins, or take short cuts in a train?

Of course not! Man was meant to walk.

THE CHANNEL ROW

BY LOFTUS LEIGH PEMBERTON

THE attempt to cross the Channel in a four-oared boat on August 26 last has been discussed in certain newspapers with much acrimony, and in terms which show that ignorance of the facts has been the basis of their utterances. If the controversy had been confined to our particular venture, little public interest would be taken in it; but it becomes of some importance, at any rate to oarsmen, when it raises the question not merely whether our crew took due precautions against risk in our particular case, but what risks are justified in similar ventures. In this view I think the circumstances of our attempt are perhaps worth recording, and that by their light the criticisms which have been made should be considered.

The facts are these. The crew consisted of Etonians, who were either personal friends or relations; three of them were well known oarsmen, and the coxswain was himself an oarsman, well fitted to take the place of any one of the crew who might become disabled. We met at Dover on Monday, August 23, and agreed that unless the weather proved to be distinctly favourable no crossing of the Channel should be attempted. The boat employed was what is called a four-oared coast galley. It was clinker built, inrigged, had a breadth of beam of some three feet nine inches, and had been chosen by me and one of the crew after paying visits to the yards of several boat-builders, both in London and elsewhere. It was sent to Dover a few days previous to our own arrival there, and through the courtesy of the members of the Dover Rowing Club, it was housed in their boat-house. It was here that, as an additional precaution, we had the fore and

aft ends of the boat canvased in. Almost the first incident which occurred after our arrival at Dover was that we were interviewed by a Press correspondent, who asked me for permission to come on board the tug which Captain Dixon, the well-known harbour-master at Dover, had kindly placed at my disposal to accompany the crew when they crossed. I told this gentleman that our expedition depended upon the state of the weather, and that, therefore, the day of crossing was quite uncertain. Whether he thought this answer evasive I do not know, but he remarked

that a similar application had been made and granted on the occasion of Mr. Grenfell's crew coming to Dover in 1885. In the face of that precedent I could hardly object, and I gave him the permission he sought. Neither Monday, August 23, nor the two following days proved suitable for crossing, and it was not till Thursday, the 26th, that the weather looked to us favourable.

On that morning we all thought that the venture might safely be made. The advice given to us by the most competent authorities at Dover had been to make the start, when we did go, some two hours before high water at Dover, and, it being

high water on the 26th about 9 A.M., we embarked about 7 A.M. Very briefly, what then occurred was this. For the first two miles or so we were in no great trouble, and indeed about 7.30 A.M. there was some prospect, as has been stated, of a better sea than that in which we had started. But in another quarter of an hour the water had become lumpy, the sky grew overcast to the southward, and the wind got up. By 8.30 A.M. we had shipped a quantity of water. I had been suffering much from sickness for some three-quarters of an hour, and being on that account quite unable to do my share of the work, I was obliged to give my oar to our coxswain, Mr. Snagge. I went on board the tug, and the coxswain's place was filled by an able seaman from the tug. Another start was made, but the sea increased, the boat rapidly filled, and then she sank under the crew, fortunately without loss of life.

Upon these facts two sets of critics have set to work upon us. One set has said, 'What a fuss about nothing! Other crews have crossed the Channel; eights have done it, fours have done it, and scullers have done it.' The other set has said, 'What folly and recklessness!' It is amusing to see how diametrically opposed to each other these criticisms are. With the first set I can almost entirely agree, except so far as it is suggested—if it be suggested—that the 'fuss' has originated with ourselves. We knew, of course, what had been done on previous occasions, and we neither courted nor desired the publicity which was afterwards given to our proceedings. But the fact that there was nothing novel in our undertaking is to a great extent ignored by those critics who allege the folly and recklessness of it, and, if referred to, it is done in such a manner as to show that they do not appreciate its significance or see how it demolishes much of their own strictures. Their own ideas, and the general confusion of them, are well illustrated by the following extracts from two of the London daily papers published after the event. One of them says:

'The four-oared coast galley with a crew of old Etonians, some of them *doubling their parts* (*sic*) as winners at Henley or in the Oxford and Cambridge match, has come to grief in the attempt to cross the Channel. The light craft simply filled and faded away from under the oarsmen, and they were left struggling for their lives in a very lumpy sea. The only objection to their venture is that it was essentially one of the sort that "prove nothing," whatever the event. It was certain beforehand that with a perfectly smooth sea they might have covered the distance

THE BOAT RAPIDLY FILLED

between Dover and Calais without turning a hair. It was equally certain that with a rough sea they could not have hoped for success. They knew it themselves, and hence their long and, as it turned out, fruitless waiting for a fine day. . . . One of these candidates for the martyrdom to a rather foolish idea was an able seaman from the accompanying tug, who had taken the place of an Etonian prostrated by sea-sickness. Mr. Grenfell's eight, who successfully made the passage twelve years ago, had one or two of their number disabled, *but they pulled them in* (*sic*). While England was still ringing with their names, a working man from the Severn quietly started on the same course all by himself, and got over just as well as the eight. He went back to the Severn, and since then, we believe, has been lost to fame.'

The other journal says:

'The recklessness with which the feat was attempted is finally exemplified by the fact that the crew contained one gentleman who could not swim. . . . Skill and endurance must at times succumb to unforeseen difficulties, but in setting about a feat of this kind before the eyes of the world nothing should be left to chance.'

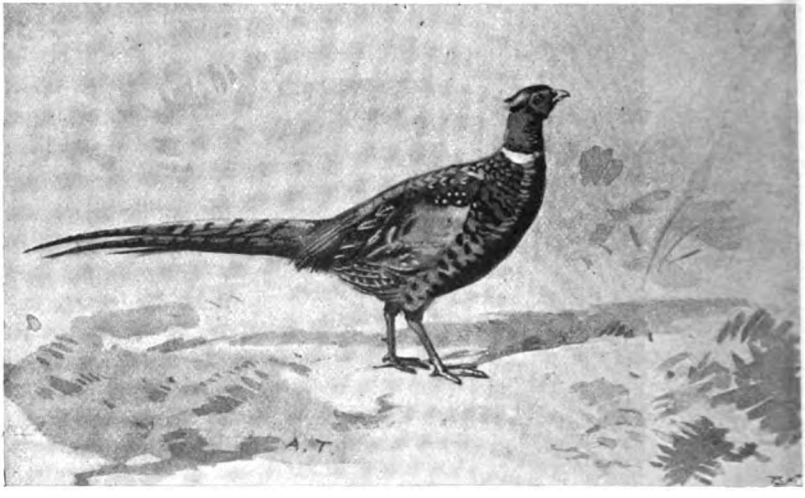
In answer to these observations—and they are good samples of what has been said in some other papers—I may make the following remarks. It will have been seen that the first journal I have quoted says that the only objection to the venture was that it could prove nothing. With as much sense might a man be told after a day's shooting or hunting that he had proved nothing. We did not want to prove anything. We were simply amusing ourselves in the manner most agreeable to us. Then as to recklessness. To what point is this charge meant to be addressed? Is it to the plan in its inception, or is it only to the means adopted for carrying it out? If the former, our critics or their predecessors must have strangely neglected their duties on all the occasions when the Channel has been crossed by oarsmen in not pointing out to the public the wickedness of the attempt; and I invite them to tell us if they have ever, and when, before the present occasion, uttered a word of hostile criticism. In the absence of it we must assume that the public have, as oarsmen have, regarded the ventures hitherto made as not being unduly hazardous, if undertaken with such ordinary precautions as sensible men were bound to take. But I suppose the above quotations are levelled against the alleged insufficiency of the precautions which we took. In this connexion the crew and the boat are two of the most important considerations. I have

already referred to the composition of the crew; and as we have been told that in a smooth sea we 'might have covered the distance between Dover and Calais without turning a hair,' I may assume that it is not to the crew personally objection is taken. As to the boat, I have stated what it was. Obviously it was not the frail structure described by our critics. I have made inquiries as to the nature of the boats used on former occasions for a similar purpose, and I am justified in saying that the boat used by us was stronger and stiffer than almost any of them. That it was admirably adapted to carry us across the Channel in the calm weather in which, and in which alone, we had intended to row, is sufficiently shown by the fact that it lived for a couple of hours in the sea which it encountered. No doubt we started in weather which deceived us. It was a mistake, and we have admitted it; and the accidents which occurred are attributable to that mistake. But does the mistake involve recklessness? And does the fact that one of the crew could not swim show it? A proposition that any sport in which the lives of human beings can be endangered, however remotely, must on that account be illegitimate, will hardly be made seriously. It is most desirable, of course, that men who use boats should be able to swim, but it does not follow that every man who cannot swim and uses boats is justly to be called reckless; still less that his companions should be so termed if an accident happens to him. Every year men climb Alpine heights, and others shoot big game. A single false step in the first case, and a single misfire in the second, has repeatedly proved fatal. Compare the risks run by these classes of sportsmen with the risks which we incurred, and does the comparison help to establish our critics' case? And yet so angry are these gentlemen that not only do they charge us with recklessness, but it will be seen, from the newspaper extracts which I have quoted, that the seaman who took the place of Mr. Snagge has been called 'one of the candidates for martyrdom.' It is hardly creditable that a brave act performed under trying conditions should be treated with such a sneer.

One other accusation has been broadly insinuated, viz. that our expedition was made with a view to notoriety. The sole foundation for this charge was the circumstance, to which I have referred, of my giving leave to a press correspondent to come on the tug. But I could hardly suppose that this act of courtesy would be construed as our critics have thought fit to construe it, when no such insinuation had been made in respect of the similar act of Mr. Grenfell in 1885. Whether it was worth while for the

correspondent to record in public print any of the incidents of our expedition may be doubtful; but that matter was more for his consideration than for ours. I was not, it is true, obliged to accede to his request; but, on the other hand, if I had refused it, I might have been accused of a discourtesy for which there would have been the less reason, as we were not ashamed of what we did.

Nothing succeeds like success. The crew of 1897 failed. It has been denied to them to sing any pæan or song of triumph, and to listen to 'England ringing with their names,' as we are told (but with another sneer) that Mr. Grenfell's crew were able to do, in happy unconsciousness of the great unknown from the Severn. By the way, this gentleman seems to have been far more reckless than any of them or of us, for not only does he cross the Channel by himself, but we are left to infer that he did so quite indifferent to sea, weather, and boat. But if the exigencies of some newspapers at a dull season of the year are such that they must make a private enterprise the subject of public comment, the least they can do, in gratitude to those who furnish them with such materials for sensational telegrams and lengthy comments, is to learn the elementary fact that amateur oarsmen are in the habit of rowing for its own sake, and that the latitude which permits in the cases of many other sports a certain amount of danger to be incurred, extends to rowing. If they had acquired this knowledge they might have been a little less precipitate in their charges against our crew, and have made themselves a little less ridiculous in singing a dirge.



REMINISCENCES OF A PHEASANT

BY THE HON. JOHN SCOTT-MONTAGU, M.P.

With Studies of Pheasant Life by ARCHIBALD THORBURN

My first recollection of existence was when I looked up at an oval whitish world encircling me, and heard the tap of a beak upon my shell. I believe that previously to this I had moved uneasily in my cramped position, but one morning a beak protruded above me, and, on making a few struggles, I found myself standing amidst the fragments of the shell that had lately enclosed me. The owner of the beak was a large black Minorca hen. I did not somehow feel as if she was my proper mother, though she treated me as such. Her feet were very heavy and big, and she had an uncomfortable way of not looking where she put them, as I found when she trod upon me one day. With regard to my early childhood, I recollect that my black foster-mother was very fussy and fidgety, and when I and my brothers and sisters ran more than a few yards from the coop wherein we roosted, she assailed us with 'Why don't you come back ?' in hen language, and made noises which, of course, although to the rest of the world unintelligible, were perfectly well understood by us. I remember, also, there was a tall brown-bearded animal on two legs, who used to visit us at intervals and supply us with food.

Not that we could not, as a rule, pick up plenty of insects for ourselves, and I well recollect a woolly brown moth, which had hurt its wing, and was creeping along the narrow path in front of the coop. I endeavoured to swallow it whole, but the fur came off in my mouth, the fat morsel stuck about half way down, and half choked me. But at that age one is apt to be very greedy, besides which, after all, it *was* very good when I did manage to swallow it.

And so the summer drifted on, until we grew bigger and bigger, and my brothers and sisters gradually wandered away farther and farther, and mixed with other chicks of our own race in the surrounding wood. Most of us had the ills of childhood, and I my proportion. The worst trouble was a tickling in the throat, which used to make me cough a great deal. Gradually the irritation grew worse and worse, until one day I coughed so much that a little red worm on the ground was the result. My black foster-mother shook her head. 'Gapes, my young ones, gapes,' said she, and, sure enough, I grew so bad that I felt almost suffocated, when the big man with the brown beard took me gently but firmly in his hand, and, having blown some horrible hot stuff down my mouth, I was seized with a final spasm, and soon afterwards I felt a great deal better. But one of my little sisters succumbed, and shortly afterwards the man removed us bodily—coop, foster-mother, and chicks—some two hundred yards off to a high sandy piece of ground, for at that time, about the end of June, there was much rain and thunderstorms. And what fun we had, as we grew in wisdom and strength! The fun was, perhaps, not without danger, and I recollect straying far into the

sweet hay one lazy afternoon, wherein were numerous luscious green caterpillars and huge big fat aphides, which I leisurely swallowed, when I noticed the grass moving some five or six feet from me, as if some animal were coming towards me. I stretched up my neck as far as I could, and saw two marvellously bright eyes set in a black frame looking at me. They were two *such* big eyes, and had a kind of roving, cruel, wild look about them! For a moment I felt almost fascinated, but remembering the many injunctions which had been given to me by my foster-mother as to avoiding four-legged furry animals, all of which she held in holy dread, I flew a short distance back towards the covert, only just in time to discover that the cat—for a cat it was—had jumped the moment after I had risen upon the exact spot where I had been. A narrow squeak, indeed, and when I told my mother she again impressed upon me how, all my life long, everything furry that has four legs must be avoided, with the exception of the hare and the rabbit. She told me that I should find the latter a very unpleasant and intrusive companion. 'The rabbit is vulgar, my dear,' she said, 'vulgar to a degree; he has such big families, and uses such bad scent. You may, however, make friends with hares, though they are very flighty, and run about a great deal too much, especially in the Spring; but then they have much better manners than rabbits, and they are useful for warning you when there are any of those cruel things called "sportsmen" about.' She also repeatedly warned me against the weasel, the stoat, and the fox, for she was a wise old hen, and had had many families of her own in the farmyard close by.

At length came August, and I used to stroll farther away from the covert, until one day I came to what seemed to me a beautiful golden forest—a field of waving barley, wherein I and many of my fellow-birds used to roam. Here we used lazily to spend our hours, and when the weather was really hot sometimes roost there, our foster-nurse having disappeared from the coop. It

never occurred to me, at that time, to ask about my real parents, but one evening I heard the man with the beard say to his companion, when he came to feed us, 'This was the lot which came from Highwood by the side of the footpath; what luck I took them just in time before the timber carts came through that way!' I made up my mind, therefore, to find out about my real parents.

One day in the barley I met an old hen pheasant with three quite small chicks running with her. Being so much older, I looked down with disdain on these mere babies, for I must have been quite six weeks older than they were, in the pride of getting my first feathers, and already able to utter some distinct, though

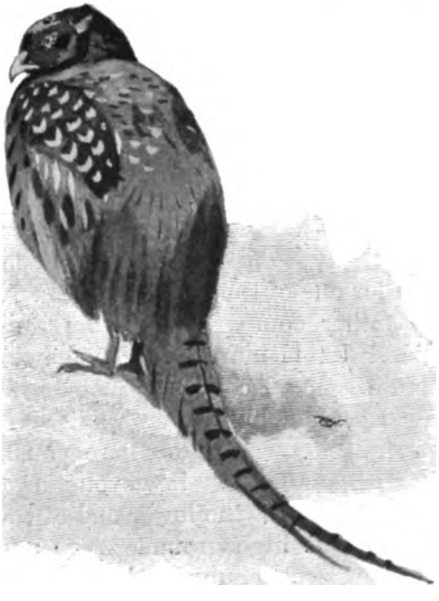
feeble, imitation of the cries of war and love which I had heard full-grown cock pheasants utter. 'Good morning,' I said; 'how small your babies are!' 'Yes,' she said bitterly, 'I had thirteen nice eggs in as cosy a nest as you ever saw, but a horrid man came and took them away in the middle of April, and, of course, I had to make another nest, and then came a thunderstorm, when the chicks were just hatched, and these are all I have left.' She seemed a kindly old thing, and, prompted by curiosity, I inquired 'And where was your nest?' 'By the footpath in Highwood,' she said. 'But I came from the footpath in Highwood,' I replied; 'at least, so the keeper said, where the timber carts turned in from the wood, and made deep ruts in the soil.'

I thought she would have fainted, as she exclaimed in a quavering voice, 'Then you must be one of my children.' I felt at once filial devotion spring up within me as she added, 'And your father will be proud of you, too; he is now over there with one of his other wives feeding on the pea stubble.' My mother did not seem to be at all jealous, and as she told me afterwards, 'It would have been very dull for your father all the time I was sitting on my late nest, and then, of course, there are not enough husbands to go round. I do not see much of his other wives, as we all have separate families to rear.' Dear old thing! she warned me to always beware of that offensive animal, the man with a gun. 'If you see the two-legged things in petticoats, it doesn't so much matter, although they are sometimes about with the two-legged things in trousers, but they are not so cruel themselves. I am told that they sometimes eat us, but they don't kill us.' Remembering my mother's injunctions, I swore all my life I would avoid the two-legged horror, even including the grave man with the brown beard, who had seemed to be so kind to me when I was suffering from 'gapes.'

One morning I was in this barley-field when I heard a strange whirring noise from a curious thing which was going round and round the field, and, flying towards the covert bank, I had to settle quickly again in the corn, for I found myself face to face with two large horses and a man on a machine, the corn all falling before him as the affair went round. Running back towards the centre of the field I found various animals, mostly rabbits, in a state of indecision and terror; also some partridges. Partridges are always friendly, civil little birds, and an old hen partridge with something like fourteen well-grown babies told me that it was all right, and that when the machine stopped in the middle of the day for the man and horses to rest I might fly or run out of one of the sides of the field without any risk. Surely enough, about mid-day the whirring noise stopped, so, cautiously peeping out, I ran across the freshly cut stubble and from the covert bank surveyed the scene of operations. Of course the rabbits, like the idiots they were, still huddled together in terror, now and again coming to the edge of the corn and glancing out nervously, though there was no one in sight and no danger. But as my mother always said: 'They have such retreating foreheads that it is impossible they can have any brains.'

After the barley was cut and carted away I grew bolder, and used sometimes to feed on the sides of the roads, soon learning

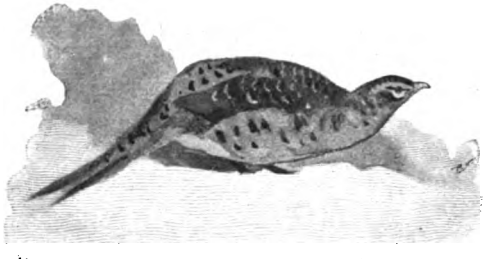
to distinguish between the shepherd and his dog, who hardly ever deigned to look at me, and the mischievous schoolboys who used to peep at me behind the hedges and throw stones. And then, in October, the first frost came. Oh! how cold it was roosting on the bare oak branch; but my feathers gradually grew thicker, and one day, while crossing a small stream, I looked down into the pool below and saw what a beautiful bird I had become. A tail eighteen inches long, a breast like burnished copper, a head and neck in all its glory of scintillating blue and green, and I felt that the world and all the joys of life were before me. I began to know my father better and used to meet him



strutting about with the air and dignity which became the veteran of two seasons. 'Two years I have escaped, my boy,' he used to say to me. 'Once I was hit in the foot, and a very sore toe I had for some time afterwards, but although the nail has never grown again quite the same, I am as hale and as hearty as ever. My spurs are longer than those of any other cock pheasant in this covert and I had more wives last season than anyone else!' Ruffling up his feathers he crowed loudly, and, satisfied with the soundness of his argument, he departed, leaving me to emulate his example.

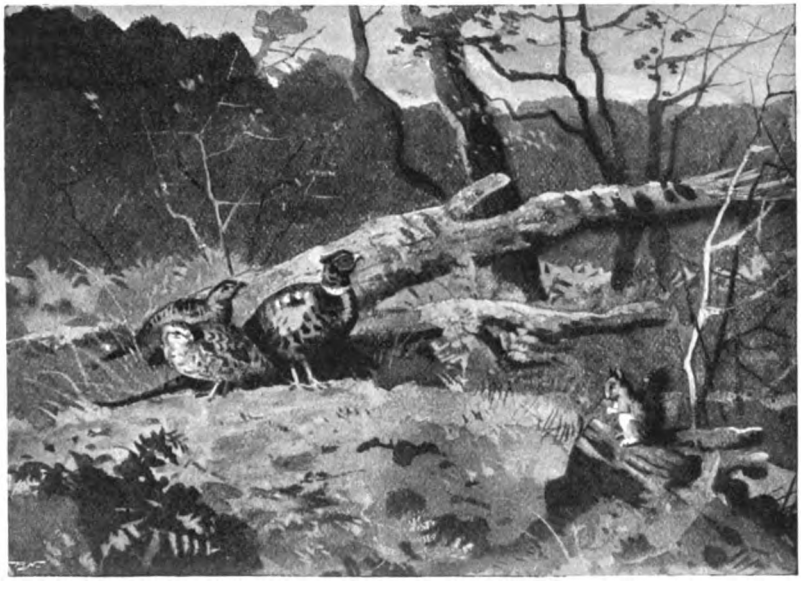
Nothing eventful occurred in my life until about the beginning of December, when, one day, going out for my morning stroll

outside the covert, I saw a small boy knocking two sticks together in front of me. I hated noises of this sort, so I retired, and thought I would try the other side of the wood towards a stubble which had not yet been ploughed up. There I saw an old woman with what had once been a white apron fluttering in the wind. Although I knew she was harmless, I walked on further along the covert bank, until I came to a fence dividing the stubble from a turnip-field. From here I was able to see several boys extended at intervals outside the edge of the covert, some with small sticks and some with small flags; and then a sort of horror of impending doom came over me. So this must be the 'shoot' I had heard talked about but never seen! Flying in over the low coppice, I looked everywhere for one of the older birds to advise me. Soon I came across my father comfortably sunning himself on the edge of a grass ride. I told him what I had noticed, and although he affected indifference, I could see that he was moved by the news. 'Run, my boy, run, but never fly if you can help it,' he said. 'Always run back, away from where you hear the shooting. If you keep with me I will show you how we can escape them. They generally begin at the lower end of the park; we will therefore get on to the high ground above and watch till the party have shot that larch clump, and then we will fly into it, and we shall remain undisturbed for the rest of the day.'



Overjoyed at the prospects of escaping, I flew with my father to the wood above, and saw presently several people with guns and a multitude of dogs and beaters, all advancing towards the larch clump. The pheasants left behind tried to escape, but if they flew high they were generally killed, the few that flew low were equally shot; out of the hundred or more birds which must have been in the clump a quarter of an hour before, not more than twenty escaped to tell the tale, and certainly not more than ten of them escaped absolutely uninjured. An hour or more passed and the shooting seemed farther away. 'Come along,' said my father, and almost before I had had time to pull myself together, I saw him sailing off. Just as I was thinking

of going, what should I see but a man with two dogs going directly to the larch clump whither my father had just sped. It was impossible to warn him unless I went myself, and that was, thought I, to encounter certain danger. I did not realise at the time that he had no gun, and that he was only an under-keeper picking up any birds which might have been overlooked when the covert was first shot; and so I remained, fearful and undecided, until about three o'clock in the afternoon, when a hare I well knew bolted past me in mad terror. 'They are coming,' he said, 'they are coming; why don't you fly away?' I gave way to an



irresistible impulse to follow him, and remembering my father's injunctions not to use my wings, I ran on until we got up to the next grass ride.

What was this? A net spread in front, making it impossible for me to run any further, and, close to the net, two or three small boys with sticks. I turned and ran back into the covert, meeting several other creatures running on. 'No use,' said I, 'no use, there's a net that way.' They would not heed, however, but rushed blindly onward. Presently I heard a shot or two in the direction of the net, while in front of me, I could already see through the underwood the legs of the advancing beaters, and hear the noise of their sticks. Terrified, I ran back again a little way until I came to a knoll where I could see what

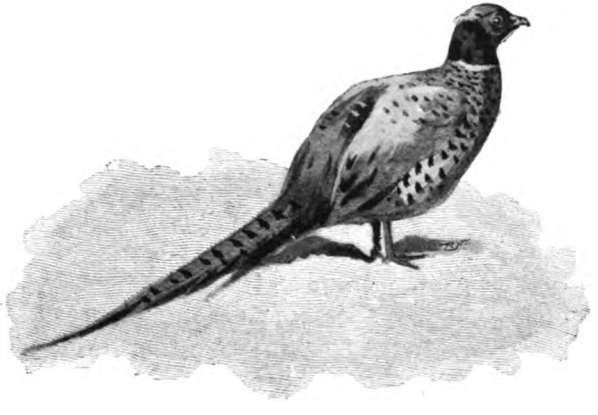
was happening in front. Four guns were standing on the same ride where the net had been, each with his loader, but one of them with a fair young lady also standing by his side. I watched the guns now and again killing one of my friends at varying angles and distances. I also noticed that the right-hand gun was talking earnestly to the aforesaid young lady, and gazing at her with much the same sort of look that I sometimes noticed in my father's face when he was with my mother.

Remembering what I had been told about the two-legged things in petticoats being kinder than those in trousers, I decided to risk my fortune over this right-hand gun. Up I got, and soaring away as fast and as high as I could, I had already passed over him before he perceived me. 'Mark!' I heard from the gun next to him, and I saw below me the man raise his gun; a little puff of white vapour, and instantaneously, I heard the shots come singing past behind my tail. Again there was a discharge, but this time, being now fully seventy yards away, I realised that at any rate the chances were on my side. I had just time, looking back when topping a high beech-tree, to see that the lady did not appear at all disappointed at my escape. On I sped over the edge of the covert, past the shivering 'stops,' and, swinging round again to the left towards the larch clump, found my father priding himself upon his superior cunning. 'Where have you been all the day, my boy?' he said; and I told him shortly my adventures. 'You would have run no risk at all if you had followed me,' he observed, with an air of superiority. 'Your poor mother is wounded; she ran in here a moment or two ago. She can never fly again,' he said, with a quaver in his voice, and looking round, I saw my mother lying down by the side of some bracken, one of her wings marked with blood. The outer pinion had been broken, not a serious wound, but one that made flight impossible. 'Of course,' my father remarked, 'they will catch her to-morrow with the dogs, and she says she doesn't really mind so much, as we must all die some time, and the winter is coming on. And then, if you cannot fly, a fox is bound to catch you sooner or later.' I never saw my mother again.

Next day the coverts were again disturbed by the keepers coming round 'picking up,' but after this for nearly a month peace reigned supreme, at any rate in the daytime. When it was dark, however, I often used to hear shots in the covert, and one bright, frosty night, when I was roosting amidst the ivy of an old gnarled oak, I woke suddenly and saw stealthily creeping about below me two men with guns, with their faces

always turned up to the stars, and looking about on the trees for any of us who may have been so incautious as to roost far away from the protection of the ivy. The few spruce-trees in the coppice were of course always crowded with roosters, but I myself preferred the shelter of the old gnarled oak and its clustering ivy.

The 'second shoot' came towards Christmas-time, and by following explicitly the tactics that my father had adopted in the first shoot, I escaped unscathed. Before the early spring had tempted the primrose into bloom, my father told me that our time of danger was now over, at least for the following eight months. With the increase of warmth, and the renewed abundance of food, the blood began to course afresh in my veins, and my fancies



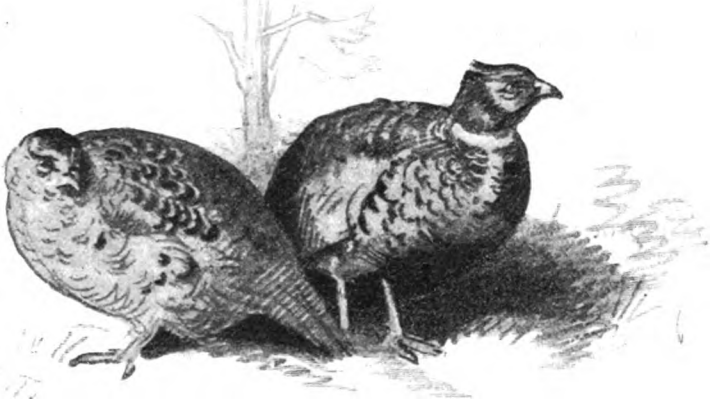
turned lightly to thoughts of love. There were always plenty of opportunities; several quite nice-looking hens had already cast amorous glances at me, and when one day I proposed to a particularly nice-looking one, by ruffling up my feathers and crowing loudly (the orthodox pheasant mode of proposal), this lady and I there and then swore to be one another's till death, or, at any rate, until the end of the summer. Several other desirable sweethearts came my way, and eventually I found myself with five admiring wives, who, by dint of much fighting and crowing, and the free use of my spurs and beak, I managed to impress with the fact that I was quite the finest young cock pheasant in the neighbourhood. I had a duel also with one of my brothers, who had successfully eluded the shooters of the previous year; but after a desperate fight he retired with many feathers pulled out of his head and neck, and with a deep scratch dangerously near his eye.

After this I was left in peace, and in secure enjoyment of my

matrimonial rights. Then came the summer, and life was really worth living. My wives would come now and again, and shyly tell me that their nests were quite full; that they were going to sit, as the case might be, on thirteen, fourteen, or fifteen beautiful eggs, and that they were quite sure there never had been such nice eggs, or such a cosy nest before. I then began to watch for danger in the vicinity, for all the nests were around the same big clover field. Only on one occasion did I detect any sign of that common complaint, female jealousy. In this case, I offered at once to arbitrate; the question being whether wife number two had more eggs than wife number three, but as neither would allow the other to look at her nest, it was impossible to decide the point until I came in and gave my opinion. Fearful of alienating the affections of either, for they were both nice young hens, I affected temporary judicial blindness, and declared that the numbers were even. Truth, however, compels me to add that wife number three came off an easy victor; she had sixteen eggs in her nest to wife number two's thirteen. During sitting-time I waited anxiously for the first chirrup of one of my hatched children, for the keeper left us undisturbed, and the required eggs for rearing were taken from a pheasantry. We were thus left in peace to rear our broods, to chance the elements, the ravages of the self-hunting terrier, and the prowling fox. And right well did my broods do that year, for hatching mostly about the middle of May, we had beautiful dry—not too dry—weather till July, when heavy rain lessened the number of my descendants. However, when harvest came round I was the responsible father of something like forty promising youngsters, before whom I used to put on my best and most dignified manners.

Strolling one day towards the old grey Manor House, as I wandered aimlessly through a beautiful herbaceous border, I saw on a seat under the high yew edge in front of me the same young gentleman who had shot at me in the previous year, with the same young lady by his side. And very fond they seemed to have grown of one another; even fonder than when I first saw them. 'We have actually been married a week,' I heard her say. So

human beings married and loved each other in just the same way as we pheasants did, and I supposed, in the coming spring, they would make their nest in the big house, or in some secluded spot in the thick yew-trees close by. I thought I would let them know I was there, so I drew myself up, and crowed loudly. 'I wonder if that was the bird *I* made you miss last year,' said she, looking tenderly at him, 'when we were first engaged. Do you remember your asking me a question—a very important question—just as that drive at the end of the beechwood began?' 'It may be,' said he, 'but there are always a great deal too many cocks left.' I now understood what my foster-mother once told me. Cruel, heartless brutes, these men, but my heart quite warmed to the lady, especially as I heard her say, 'Look what a handsome fellow he



is, and no white ring round his neck either; one of the old-fashioned sort, isn't he?' for I was of good old English parentage, and looked down with insular disdain upon the new foreign importations with their big white rings and their light-coloured bodies.

Summer and autumn followed on, once again came round the fall of the leaf, and with it the time of danger. I thought I should again escape by following the same manœuvres as before when the shoot was finally arranged; but that day the young squire had seen several other old cocks copying my father's plan, and skimming away back to the clump which had already been beaten in the morning. That is the fate of clever and original thought—it is sure to be copied. 'We will have that out,' he said to the head keeper, 'at the end of the day;' and so before I knew danger

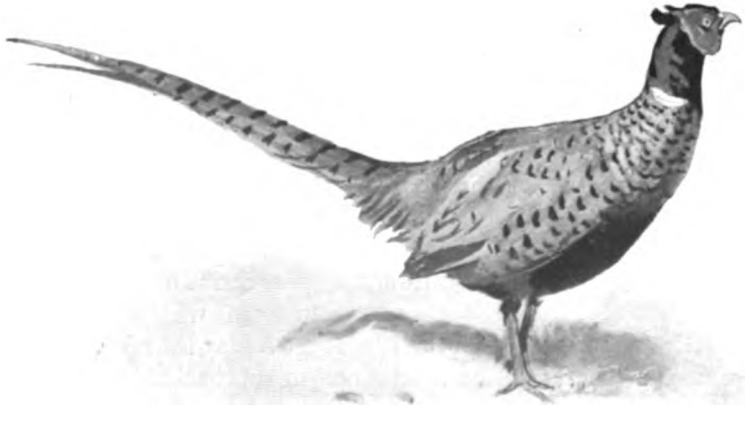
was nigh I found myself enclosed in a pitiless ring. Feeling that, if I must die, I would die bravely and well, I flew up, and with a mixed feeling of fear and confidence I topped the larches, to find that the third gun on the left in front of me was the gentleman whom I had previously seen, and by his side the same young lady who was sitting by his side in the garden on that summer day.

Right well did I fly, higher and higher, but no look of pity came from the lady now. She was gazing at the ground, apparently engaged in rooting up a thistle with her stick, and he, with a keen and cruel eye, evidently bent upon the destruction of as many of us as possible. Oh, for a glance from her to distract his thoughts! Had her eyes lost part of their charm as the glamour of the honeymoon had worn off? Just as I was swinging down wind towards him I saw him aim, and heard the shots whistle up behind me, one striking one of my tail feathers. For a moment a glow of pride came over me, but the second shot struck me as with the blow of a stick. A dazed feeling succeeded, and I found that my right wing was broken; indeed it was only with the greatest effort that I could manage to prevent myself falling headlong. Resolutely sustaining my flight, I glided down to the ground some two hundred yards behind the guns. Just before I alighted I could see a big black dog running in my direction. I had still happily the use of my legs, so on I ran for dear life, with my wing half trailing on the ground, and with a sense of humiliation, and sickly, death-life terror. Surely I might escape if I was cunning, for in front I saw a friendly rabbit-hole, and in I ran, all beyond me darkness; but, at any rate, there was safety for a time. So rabbits had some redeeming qualities—they made holes! I heard the lumbering retriever over-run the place where I had disappeared, the shouts of his master calling him back, and the comforting reflection came over me that, at any rate, the big black dog would not be able to catch me in my dark retreat. But, alas! I had left one of my feathers on a bramble at the edge of the hole. 'He must have run in here,' I heard the well-known voice of the head keeper say, and before I could resist I found myself pulled out by the legs by the same hand that had tenderly held me many a time when a chick, that had poured the burning mixture down my throat when I was suffering from 'gapes,' the hand of the big brown-bearded man, the head keeper. 'If he isn't badly hurt he will do for the pheasantry next year,' I heard him say, and he took me paralysed with fear to the young master, who, with his wife, was standing close to where I had flown over them, counting the bodies of my dead brethren. 'Shall I knock him on the head, sir?' the keeper

said. 'What a pity!' the lady interposed; 'what a beauty! he is exactly like the bird we saw when we were down here on our honeymoon, isn't he, Jack? he might do for the new pheasantry.' 'The outer pinion only is broken,' said my captor, 'and he is one of the old-fashioned ones—the sort we want, no white about him—they are the best, you know, sir; shall I keep him?' 'Yes, I think you had better,' replied the young squire, and I found myself suddenly thrust into the pocket of my captor, a pocket which smelt horribly of dried blood, of oil, and, above all, of the bad scent of those vulgar brutes, the rabbits—the rabbit whom I had always held in such contempt, until I nearly escaped down his burrow.

. . . . . .

My life is now, at any rate, a very easy one; my wing is quite healed—minus the outer joint—but I long for the joys of the open, bold life that I lived in the woods. I suppose now, when they do not want me any longer, I shall be knocked on the head like a common barn-door fowl, to be hung for a week in the larder, and to be stewed for two nights in the stock-pot. A tough old cock, they will say, fit for nothing else. Perhaps, however, they will roast me, and then won't I give that man indigestion!



THE FUTURE OF RUGBY FOOTBALL

BY W. J. LIAS

THE average duration of a tram-horse's career is said, by those who love statistics, to be three short years. Double it, and you have a Rugby footballer's. After that, for the horse the butcher, or a nameless fate; for the footballer the shelf, alleviated by the sweets of memory. A man, therefore, who has played twelve years may claim to be regarded as a veteran of veterans, and as such may be expected to indulge in all that luxury of reminiscence which is the privilege and pleasure of his kind.

But if any of his readers think that their humble servant, whose opinions they are indolently skimming, is one to magnify the glories of the past, to decry the present, or despair about the future, they are mistaken. For why should a present player dote upon the past? Why should he spend his time in praising H. B. Tristram as the finest of full backs, when there is Jeremiah Jones of Llanfihangel, or James Sloper of the Rugford Wanderers, to claim the title from the best of them? Why, among three-quarters, must he hold that Leonard Stokes, Macfarlane, Bolton, stand unrivalled, when there is Gould to-day; or taking half-backs, why is he obliged to choose between Don Wauchope, Twynam, Rotheram, and those Scots from whom he learned what little skill he has at football? Must he say that Wauchopes, Twynams, Rotherams and Scots are unapproachable, when, to his confusion, he has played against Donaldson and R. H. Cattell? Is the talk of forwards, and must he stand breathless at the thought of Gurdons, who, to his youthful admiration, their great credit, and their country's gain, played, goodness knows how many times, for England? Must he stand mute and breathless and bow down when in these later days delighted Ireland puts teams into the field such as she put last year? No! for dash,

resource, speed, energy, and resolution, he ventures with conviction to declare that no team of forwards in the history of the game could be found to give them points; and if only they had been a thought more trained, or had been blessed with better backs behind them, they would have swept all opposition into the four seas.

So much then for the present and the past; and for the future need a man despair? Surely not, so long as Richmond and Blackheath, Cardiff and Newport, Edinburgh Academicals and Lansdown (Dublin) flourish, not to mention a whole host of other clubs. Need he mourn so long as universities exist, and public schools like Rugby, Cheltenham, and Marlborough are devoted to the game—with Uppingham the last recruit? There are also the Scotch schools, Fettes and Loretto, sound seminaries of learning and of football, sounder perhaps of learning than of football. Need he grieve when these play well and keenly, as they have ever played? As for English schools, they play better and more keenly than they used to play; better, because they are much better coached; more keenly, because they are allowed to play against each other. If anyone doubt this statement let him watch a match between two schools, Bedford, say, and Haileybury, and be convinced; or if the doubt extends to the question of play being better coached, let him inquire how many Rugby Football Blues have been given masterships in public schools of late, and then say, if he can, that their gift of Rugby football stood in the way of their advancement.

Nor is the growth of keenness limited to schools; witness the number of new clubs recently formed and the enormous increase in the number of spectators; an increase viewed, it is true, by some with feelings of regret. 'Football,' they cry, 'degenerated to a gladiatorial show. England degenerate too; the rabble shout of falling Rome, *panem et Circenses*, free food and free football, the end of England's greatness is at hand.' But they forget that spectators have to pay, and they forget also that, although free football in a sporting candidate's address might prove attractive in some parts of England, still, as yet, not even the most forward Radical has gone beyond a mild 'free breakfast table.' There is some time therefore, it would seem, before the Goths, wherever they are bred, who are to overthrow our decadent society, arouse and glut their ire.

But, as a matter of fact, this increase in the number of spectators is not altogether a thing to be deplored. Let us consider it. You, sir, sitting in your armchair reading this, is it not wonderful that 60,000 men of like passions with yourself,

stronger passions very likely, and certainly less schooled, should quietly assemble round a plot of ground, wait patiently for a considerable time, watch an exciting match in which they are intensely interested, and as soon as it is over quietly disperse? Is it not wonderful? or could you wish for proof more striking to the mind of the good sense, good humour, and strong self-control of your own countrymen? I don't know what you think, nor do I greatly care unless you happen to agree with me; but whenever I see such a crowd my heart goes wholly out to that Lord Derby who could cry, 'Lord, what am I that I should govern such a nation!' And I muse on what might happen if they gave their passions play.

But, apart from the question of the crowd itself, and the emotions that it stirs, is it to be supposed that any man, with football in him, could watch a match in such circumstances and not desire to play—or, indeed, in any circumstances? It is impossible, and I could give a hundred instances to prove it, but in mercy I refrain. Besides, is it not, after all, lost labour to deplore what is inevitable? and such an increase in the popularity of Rugby football was inevitable from the moment when the game, following the natural lines of its development, became more open, and forced the officials of the Rugby Union reluctantly to recognise the fact, and legislate accordingly. It became inevitable from the moment when Mr. Vassall's Oxford team, by a stroke of genius on their captain's part, initiated systematic passing; and it became yet more inevitable when Newport, about five years later, took the world by storm with heeling out, thanks to the generalship of A. J. Gould. And within certain limits the more open the game grows, the greater of necessity will be its popularity; for, with all deference to an older generation, don't you think a solid scrimmage which might last five minutes or a house match which might last six weeks was, after all, a drama rather long drawn out? And don't you think a poor spectator, doomed on a rainy day to watch a stationary scrimmage steaming, needed all the patience of at least two Jobs or one bottom fisher? There was, of course, the chance of a brilliant meteoric flash-like run to stir imagination and rejoice the heart, but there was also always the off-chance, supposing fifty such runs had been made, each crowned with a triumphant try, that, rain or no rain, just a single lucky place-kick might undo them all, and leave the said spectator with his sense of justice outraged and his dearest hopes destroyed. The poor man would have to mend his mangled feelings with such balm of comfort as his thoughts might derive from his conviction that the weakest side had won.

Now, thanks to various improvements in the system of scoring —though three points still appear too many for a penalty goal— and thanks also to improvements in the style of play, a match even in wet weather, if not exactly the seventh heaven of delight from the spectator's point of view, or from the player's, is usually marked by a few stirring incidents; and, at any rate, the score, if there is any, will not unfairly represent the play; so that, instead of grumbling, there seems reason to be thankful. To show that this is not the unsupported pious, or impious, opinion of an obscure individual, the considered judgment of one, not the least famous, of her Majesty's Q.C.'s may here conveniently be quoted. 'A dull game, your game of Rugby football,' he remarked some years ago; 'they seem to be continually engaged in forming an elaborate *testudo*.' Last year, however, when, from the largeness of his heart, he had consented to run down with the writer and watch a certain match, he exclaimed, almost with enthusiasm, 'Egad, they have improved your game. There's much more skirmishing, and upon my honour you can sometimes see the ball!' He clinched his commendation by offering to come again.

Yes, there is hope for Rugby football; but there is danger too. The recent decision of the Rugby Union in the well-known case of Mr. Gould, and the deadlock which would have resulted between clubs in England and Wales if that decision had not been taken, which may still result between clubs in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and has resulted so far as Wales and international matches are concerned, make the present time seem opportune for calling temperate attention to those dangers.

Briefly, what happened in the case of Mr. Gould was this. It was proposed to present him with a furnished villa in recognition of his services to football. The Welsh Union gave its sanction and a subscription. The committee of the Rugby Union declared that Mr. Gould, if he accepted it, would be professional, but, with a politic neglect of logic, did not forbid its clubs to play against him, though by their rules they ought to have been prevented. The international board—an anomalous body consisting of two members each from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, which has control over international matches—went a step farther, and declared that the Welsh Union, by subscribing to the testimonial, had been guilty of an act of professionalism—a wholesale and unnecessary condemnation, which included, by the way, no less a worthy than Sir William Harcourt, who in the kindness of his heart subscribed. The Welsh Union, sooner than make trouble, was willing to withdraw its subscription, but

naturally insisted on its right to play its best three-quarter, particularly as no Welshman, or anyone else who knows anything about him, doubts that Mr. Gould is an amateur above suspicion. However, the Scotch and Irish matches were not played; and, unless the international board sees fit to reconsider its decision, as nearly everybody hopes it will, Wales must remain excluded from international matches, so that the championship will be robbed of an attractive feature.

But, whatever action the international board takes, the danger of the present state of things is obvious. The Welsh Union, acting within its powers, takes a certain step; the committee of the Rugby Union condemns it, but is forced to withdraw its condemnation. The Scotch and Irish Unions are not touched. They can condemn or not, just as they please. Suppose—and it is quite conceivable—that the Scotch Union condemns the action of the Welsh, and the Irish Union, for political reasons, condemns the English, then the fun begins. Lansdown may play the Academicals, the Academicals may play Blackheath, Blackheath may play Newport, but Lansdown may not play Blackheath, nor may the Academicals play Newport. Suppose, however, as is probable, that clubs from all four countries may play against each other to their hearts' content, it still remains for the international board—which, by the way, is irresponsible in all other matters—to decide whether England, Ireland, and Scotland may play Wales, or each other. And if they continue to exclude Wales for wishing to play Mr. Gould, we are reduced to this—that Mr. Gould playing for Newport is not a professional, but Mr. Gould playing for Wales is.

On the horns of this dilemma we should be content to leave the board impaled, if only human nature were not human nature. But, in any case, it is quite plain that the game has outgrown the present management, and that a system by which England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales may all make different laws upon important matters, subject to no more control than mutual consideration and the requirements of club football, is a standing danger to the game. Nor is the existence of an international board which is both responsible and irresponsible an altogether harmonising element; and anyone who loves the game at all, and looks upon it as perhaps the best of games, may be forgiven if he sound the note of warning, and beg all fellow-footballers beware lest, almost before they know it, the good game they love is broken into fragments past repair, and that Rugby football, which was once one and indivisible, becomes five or six different games played under different rules.

Already there has been one great secession, and with whatever feelings we may view it, there can be no doubt that the Northern Union is successful, and that its agents, offering pecuniary advantages which less wealthy players cannot well afford to overlook, are already working havoc among Welsh and English clubs. Nor can we afford to blink the fact that the Association game, which allows its players to be paid, grows in popularity much faster than does Rugby, though most men who have played both agree that Rugby is the better game. With these two facts before us we are absolutely bound to ask whether it is desirable or wise to make so dead a set against the principle of payment, and whether, if desirable and wise, it is also possible. It is hard, even for footballers, to kick against the pricks. And the truth is, that the mischief is already done. If a club wants to pay its members, a club will, and no rules the Rugby Union, or any other union, can make will ever prevent it. For though the rules are there, no Vehmgericht nor Spanish Inquisition, nor all the vigilant committees of the world, could possibly maintain effective supervision. The difference between an amateur and a professional lies deeper than mere regulations —it lies in the heart; and when we find that by the Rugby Union Rules a professional cricketer, or a professional runner, or a prizefighter, may be an amateur at Rugby football, but a professional Association player may not, does not the distinction strike us as being over-fanciful an l fine? Is not the whole case almost given away? Is not the little god of laughter smiling somewhere in his sleeve? Is it not time the Rugby Union should withdraw from what may prove its suicidal isolation?

I have said that there is hope for Rugby football, and abundant hope there is. But that hope depends on what is done in the near future. It depends upon the constitution of some central authority, adequate, representative, and international, with full power over the rules of the game, and it depends upon the attitude of that authority towards the obvious necessities of working-men, in short, towards the question of professionalism, what the future of the game will be. If a broad view is taken, Rugby football may be trusted to go on extending its sturdy and delightful influence and to hold its own with any game; but if a narrow view is taken, the strength of Rugby football will be sapped, the parent stem will go on shedding leaves and branches. Union after union will spring up after the manner of the Northern Union, and the game, in England and Wales at any rate, will in time come to be confined to a few schools, the universities, and perhaps a dozen London clubs.

It is for present footballers to make their choice.

THE OLD COACHING

BY ALEX. INNES SHAND

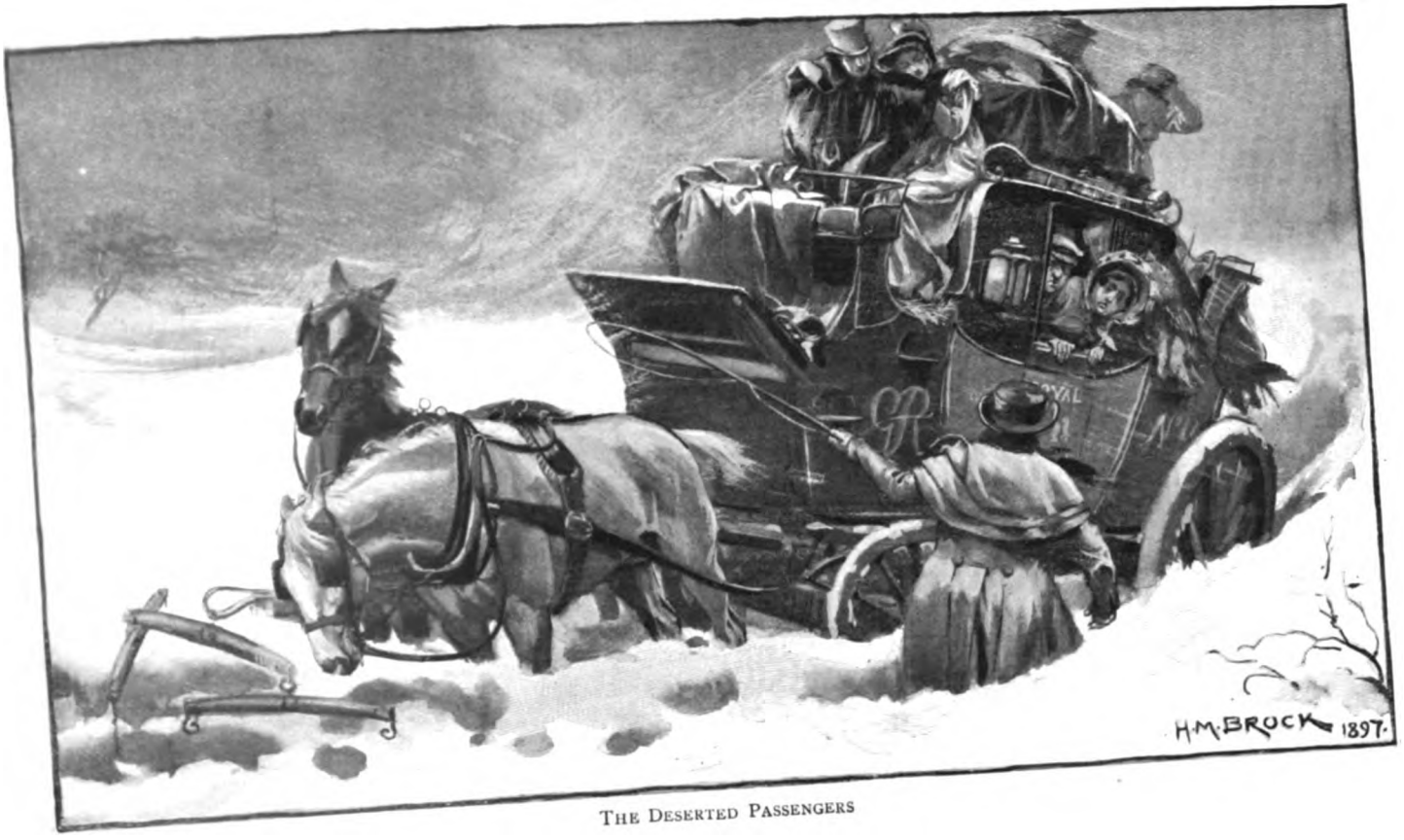
THE relics of the old coaching days are fast disappearing. Where are the famous metropolitan hostelries, whence scores of coaches scattered daily in all directions? The 'Bull and Mouth,' with its ranges of subterraneous stabling, always associated with the dispatch of the mails, has been swallowed in the buildings of the General Post Office. The 'Saracen's Head,' where Mr. Squeers mustered his consignments of victims for Dotheboys Hall, vanished with the construction of the Holborn Viaduct. The 'Belle Sauvage,' where Mr. Weller used to put up, and which he innocently named as his parish to the registrar who sold him a marriage licence, is become the headquarters of an enterprising publishing firm. *Tempora mutantur.* Hatchett's, the 'White Horse Cellar,' and the 'Gloucester Coffee-house,' where all coaches on the western roads pulled up to pick up West-end passengers, are now mere names and shadowy memories. The fashionable hotel, with its sumptuous suites of apartments and frescoed restaurant with *cuisine à la Française*, stands on the site of the coffee-room with the sanded floor, and the double rows of boxed-in compartments, cramped as so many state cabins or bathing-machines. Elderly travellers can remember the rough-and-ready breakfasts, even when railways had been running coaches off the roads. The tough beefsteak, like grilled gutta-percha, the ham and eggs which scented the stuffy apartment till high noon, the tankards of ale and the tumblers of steaming brandy-and-water, replenished from the kettle on the hob, which left circlets on the tablecloths, too seldom changed. Gone are the glories of Barnet and Hounslow, with the stabling that might have quartered squadrons of cavalry, with helpers in perpetual waiting on the harnessed teams, and the postboys booted and ready for the saddle, when they had stripped the smock-frock for the gay-coloured jacket. The revival of coaching shows that the spirit and excitements of that olden time have still a hold on the tastes and imaginations of Englishmen. The road would have died hard had it not been crushed

out of existence by a power that annihilated time and space, and with pace that far surpassed a team of 'Flying Childers' drew luxurious carriages like rolling sitting-rooms. But the new revival, though meritorious, is amateurish. The coaches, starting from splendid hotels at convenient hours, are timed to cover easy distances. The unhurried luncheon, with cigar and coffee to follow, is a pleasant feature in the leisurely trip; and should the weather break, the outside passenger has only to get down and take a ticket back to town from the station within whistling distance.

It was very different before MacAdam and Palmer had succumbed to the more inventive genius of a Worcester and a Watts. 'Nimrod' remarks, in his famous essay on the road, that the highways and the coaching had been brought nearly to perfection just as the latter ceased to exist. Yet long-coaching at the best was a serious business, and had its sensational as well as its agreeable side. What suggested the subject to me was the old sporting portraits still to be seen in the coffee-room of many a provincial inn and the bar of many a village public. Hostelries may give place to hotels, stables are demolished or turned to other purposes, but the perishable canvases of the masters of the brush seem to be destined for the most part to a providential immortality, and many of the reproductions of Fores' sporting sketches are likely to survive with the masterpieces of a Titian or a Velasquez. You see the mails loading for the night journey in the yard of the 'Swan-with-two-necks' or the 'Bull and Mouth,' the passengers, in tight topcoats and tall hats, bracing themselves for the ordeal they contemplate with apprehension. You see, with strong sympathetic exhilaration, the coachman springing his lively team of bays over Harford Bottom, to get a few spare minutes in hand in case of accidents. You see the up-and-down Devonport 'Quicksilvers,' keeping time to a minute, exchanging flying salutations as they cross in a deep cutting, illuminated by the reflected glare of the side-lamps. Then you have the darker side of the picture—the hardships, the hazards, and the spice of peril. The coach has charged an unopened turnpike-gate in a fog, for the guard has got abroad in his bearings, or the turnpike-man has been deaf to the warnings of the horn. The leaders are down in the shivered timber, one of the wheelers is plunging on the top of them, and we may fancy the feelings of the old lady inside. Or we see in the memorable storm of 1836 both Holyhead mails half buried in the snow, a chariot with its living contents being steadily

drifted over, and the coachman of the up-mail, who has rashly descended, engulfed to the armpits in the drift, encumbered with innumerable box-coats. The guard, with prompt resolution, is preparing to go off with the leaders and the post-bags; but what are the deserted passengers to go through before they establish communications again with food, fires, and civilisation? One may be suffering from chronic catarrh, and another, on his way to a consultation in town, is far gone in a galloping consumption. The nerves are likely to kill them, if the disease does not. I dare not trespass on the ground 'worked' in the 'Badminton Library,' with rare personal knowledge and wonderful memory, by the Duke of Beaufort and Lord Algernon Seymour. But there seems room enough for some rambling outside gossip on the social and picturesque aspects of the road which have left a vivid impress on the pages of popular writers and novelists.

Perhaps the most disagreeable part of the business was the unholy hour of the morning start. Colonel Hawker, who was indefatigably energetic, notwithstanding the trouble of an old wound and his being a good deal of a *malade imaginaire*, curious in pills and patent medicines, is always being called sharp at 4 A.M., or taking a header into the sheets for a snatch of sleep before establishing connexions. The preliminary jolting eastwards in a hackney coach from his lodgings in the West, through fog, rain or slush, was no joke; for the Colonel, who was a shrewd old soldier, always secured his place at headquarters. Tom Brown, when he made his first trip to be entered at Rugby, was in still worse case. Though he slept the night before at the 'Peacock' in Islington, he was down in the coffee-room at 2.50, warming his boots and gulping hot coffee. No allowance for laggards. The mail dashes up to the door. 'Tell young gent to look alive,' says the guard. 'Toot, toot, toot! The ostlers let go their heads, the four bays plunge at the collar, and away goes the "Tally-ho" into the darkness, forty-five seconds from the time they pulled up.' Had the 'Tally-ho' even stopped to change, the delay might have been under sixty seconds. That may have been all pleasant enough on a balmy midsummer morning, but Tom took his plunge into the world in bitter November frost. Our grandfathers, from force of tradition and habit, going on the principle of the survival of the fittest, took neither luxurious nor reasonable precautions against cold. The burly coachman might envelop himself in coats and capes till he was padded against any ordinary accident and helpless if he were pitched head-foremost into snow. The ordinary traveller wore nothing



THE DESERTED PASSENGERS

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beyond the everyday winter wardrobe, and it seems marvellous that no ingenious inventor had anticipated the impenetrable ulster or the modern railway wrapper. The Duke of Beaufort, by an exceptional instance of astuteness, once brought a horse-rug, to the envy of his fellow-passengers, when travelling lightly clad down to Badminton. Christopher North, in his 'Recreations,' gives the ideal of an outside's costume for the box seat from Edinburgh to the metropolis, and seldom did he give such free rein to his fancy. The series of shirts is surmounted by a succession of time-worn waistcoats, and then comes the overlaying of the half-dozen of coats, the whole enveloped in the 'shag-hued wrap-rascal, betokening that its wearer was up to snuff.' But Christopher was always addicted to romancing, especially when on the war-path after a Dr. Kitchener with tomahawk and scalping-knife, and we are sure that Professor Wilson, who walked the Highlands bare-breasted in the winter, would have scorned such effeminacy. We take Tom Brown as a more reliable type of the traveller, and it must be remembered that Tom was the only son of a wealthy squire and the darling of a doting mother. Tom has nothing to fight the frost in but a tight-buttoned Petersham, and there he sits for hours with unprotected legs, and his feet, which he has ceased to feel, dangling six inches from the roof. And many a man and boy has done his fifty hours in such dress at high pressure, without taking into account the chances of accidents and storms. The strange thing was that our looser-living grandfathers affected tight garments from the collar to the boots. They were difficult to get into at the best; they were more difficult to get out of when soaked, and they were devised with almost diabolical ingenuity to interfere with business or sport and check the circulation. Even Scrope, the prince of deer-stalkers, and the contemporary sportsmen in the 'Oakleigh Shooting Code' are braced up in frock-coats which might have passed muster in Pall Mall. Moreover, they generally cling to the top hat, which must have been the most inconvenient of headgear on mountain or coach box. Holding on that hat with a stiff breeze setting in under the ear should have been enough to put a Ross or Osbaldistone off his shooting, or to make a Job break out in blasphemy, when booked for an outside place.

In winter or wild weather there was a choice of discomforts. Perhaps, on the whole, the interior may have been preferable, though it was a case of tight packing in promiscuous company. Even the originally agreeable pressure of the most fascinating of her sex might pall on you on the interminable stretch of highway

between London and Newcastle. It was much more likely that luck would be against you, with a corpulent lady by your side and a portly gentleman opposite. Then difficulties would arise about dovetailing the legs, to use a familiar Americanism, and any movement to get at the handkerchief or snuff-box would provoke scowling looks or shrill remonstrance. You ran the ascending gamut of various sensations of discomfort, from simple pins and needles in the feet to cramps and the slow agonies of crucifixion. There might be the man with the hacking cough or the mother with the squalling baby. The nets above were bulging with umbrellas, hats, and loose parcels. The space below the seats was encroached upon by fore and hind boots, for each cubic inch had been carefully economised. The pockets were stuffed with bottles and packets of sandwiches. Your fellow-passengers were refreshing themselves at frequent intervals, there was a pervading odour of spirits and peppermint drops, and the loose straw that thinly carpeted the bottom was often fusty and seldom fragrant. It was not the accommodation of a Pullman car, or of a *salon* on the Orient or Brindisi expresses, and yet it must have been regarded as comparatively luxurious. At least, Hawker tells us that on the northern coaches the inside fare was double that of the outside.

Indeed, it was no light matter to face the Yorkshire Wolds or the passes of the Cheviots in driving sleet or drenching rain, especially after long travel from the South, with slight opportunity of stretching the legs and none of shifting your raiment. And there was the knowledge that, once committed to the grind, there was no alternative but to go through with it. If a faint-hearted mortal chose to forfeit his money and give in half way, he had reason to repent. Whether bound upon business or bent upon pleasure, probably time was of some importance, and at any rate nothing is more irritating even to the idler than tantalising delay. Half a dozen daily coaches then did the work performed now by scores of crowded trains. Coach after coach might dash up to the inn where the waiter on Providence had broken the journey; he might be roused in the middle of the night, and in expectation from dawn to dusk. He might wait as long as Johnson often waited at Lichfield for return post-chaises to London, before he found a vacant seat to renew his unspeakable griefs.

That is the blacker side of the picture, for old-time coaching was the Purgatory of the aged, the ailing, and the effeminate. Naturally it has not commended itself to novelists, who prefer to dwell on the glories and excitements of the road, and these were undeniable. There is nothing better or more spirited in all his

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books than Dickens's description of Tom Pinch's night-drive from Salisbury to Town, when the coachman declared that, 'rum as the box-seat looked, he was as good a one to go in pint of conversation as ever he'd wish to sit by.' It is the romance and poetry of rapid motion, and the pen as it passes the changing scenes in breathless review can scarcely keep pace with the galloping teams. It is a rare piece of panoramic scene-shifting of southland scenery in dusk, brilliant moonlight, and breaking day, from the broad commons of Wilts to the suburbs of London. 'Yo ho! among the gathering shades, making of no account the deep reflections of the trees, but scampering on through light and darkness all the same, as if the light of London, fifty miles away, were quite enough to travel by and some to spare.' 'Yo ho!' as the guard crawls forward on the coach roof, to make a third in the contents of Mrs. Lupin's basket, and all the time, with the ringing hoofs and the rattle of the splinter bars, 'the bits of blood were put along all the quicker, for the greater glory of the snack.' Dickens wrote in the freshness of lively recollection. Many a time, when he had not hired special post-chaises, he must have travelled that West road in joyous excitement after achieving one of his marvels of flying reporting. They tell us now that he was an immorally alcoholic writer, and certainly he gives a jovial idea of the old coaching times. It was not only the worthy Squeers who was continually getting down to 'stretch his legs.' The respectable Mr. Pickwick and his companions of the Club were always rushing up yards to swallow steaming compounds or foaming tankards of ale as time permitted. The frugal Pecksniff and the avaricious Jonas neglected no chances of replenishing travelling flasks at the bar. The elder Weller, as he laid on flesh, had acquired an inveterate habit of turning up his little finger till, as his son expressed it, he should have felt for ever like a walking brandy bottle, had he not been a thoroughly seasoned vessel. But the fact was that the travellers of the time, with prolonged exposure and passive endurance, could stand a considerable quantity of strong drink with impunity, and, as I am inclined to think, they were none the worse for it. They had to endure, not to toil, and Nature suggested what was good for them. As for the coachmen and guards, with their perpetual exposure, they became spirit-proof as well as weather-proof, and when they retired to their public-houses with their savings in a green old age, they could still set an excellent example to their customers.

Those drivers of the mails and light coaches were wonderful

THE COACH ROCKS PERILOUSLY

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whips. Heavy of body for the most part, they were singularly light of hand. Fifteen stone, more or less, was all in their favour, for they could put the drag on a bolting team by sheer weight; but they gave the wrist to the horses they were springing, and came to know each mouth to a nicety. Take up the curb of that near wheeler a link, put the off-leader in the check, were the ready instructions to the helpers after the first trial of a novice. They were stolid and somewhat unimaginative, as a matter of course, for if they had morbidly realised their grave responsibilities, their nerves must have gone to pieces. Their proprietors had bound themselves under heavy penalties to keep time in all weathers, over long distances and every variety of ground. No easy thing to do with perfectly broken horses. But anything with bone or blood was deemed safe and suitable for coach work. Cheapness, next to pace and a certain staying power, was the chief recommendation. Any blemished rogue or incorrigible savage was shunted on to the coach establishment in the last resort from the private stable or the hunting field. What with judicious handling and regular work, he was soon brought to his bearings, and accidents were rare, though incidents were frequent. There was always excitement of sensational expectation at each change to break the dull monotony of the journey. Before the coachman had well tossed the reins to a helper the panting team was cast loose with the knotted traces, and was walking wearily stablewards in a cloud of steam. A clatter of more sprightly hoofs on the cobble paving of the yard, and they are met by the new comers. The coachman is down, and looking curiously at a wiry and rather weedy mare. She is laying back her ears and showing a good deal of bloodshot eyeball. The helper handles her gingerly, and jumps back just in time, as by something like sleight of hand he attaches the near trace. Evidently with her light make she is cut out for a leader; but on this, her trial trip, they have hitched her alongside of a sober wheeler. The coachman, with a foot on the roller bolt, has swung himself up again and settled in his seat, with the word of action—'Give 'em their heads.' The novice absolutely declines to take hers: she seems to have made up her mind for a kicking bout; already she had shown herself handy with her heels when they shaved the helper's chest. Then she thinks better of it, and, tucking in her hind-quarters, she sets her back to the ponderous coach, as if she were resolved to bring the day's travel to a deadlock. She has counted without the coachman and her stable companions. The lash is drawn lightly across the impatient leaders: the other wheeler is silently wakened up: a simultaneous plunge forward pulls her well-nigh off her legs,

and a punishing cut rouses her to frenzy. The coach rocks perilously as it dashes down the sloping street, and if it were topheavy it would infallibly topple over. But the bulk of the baggage is stowed in the boots, the centre of gravity is low, and the skilful coachman has the tits in hand again, although they are still swinging along at a tremendous pace. The lost minutes must be made up; the stranger, fuming and fretting herself into a lather, has been pulling a full half of the vehicle herself, and by the time she has reached the end of the stage she is sobered sufficiently by her first lesson

I know not how it happened, but on a road I used often to travel there were relays where I invariably looked out for squalls, and was very seldom disappointed. One of these, as it chanced, was on the middle of a moor, with a steep dip to an arched bridge over a stream. Perhaps they sent the rogues there because, being in a solitude, there were no loiterers to witness their outbreaks and indiscretions. The head ostler had become an expert in dealing with obstinacy or vice. He used to have a stock of old collars in readiness for the kickers to dance upon. When a sulker threw himself down in a dogged fit of ill-temper, the old stableman had straw and matches, which superseded any necessity for whipcord and strong language. It was an ugly place for differences of opinion, and it was only by miracles of presence of mind and dexterity that the bridge was negotiated without becoming the scene of fatal accidents. Once I remember one masterly touch of the whip saving us from what seemed an inevitable overturn, as the off wheel grazed the stone post at the corner. But the crack coachman was as consummate an artist with the whip as any angler in a southern chalk-stream with gossamer, gut and the midge-fly. He used it charily, but with telling effect, and could sting a recalcitrant with the lash-tip to an inch without setting up the backs of the other horses. A touch or a flying flick would guide the galloping team; and how he could use the lash with a long punishing cut was shown when it was drawn across the slouched shoulders of some yokel who had fallen asleep in his waggon and been slow to waken from his slumbers. It was but natural that the coachman, who sat serenely enthroned, should have something of the swaggering air of an autocrat. But on the whole he was one of the most popular of characters, the object of respectful admiration to the males, and a sort of platonic Sultan among matrons and maids. Saluted as universally as the mayor of the borough or the member for the county, he knew his station and kept his dignity, but was

ever ready to unbend and shake his sides at some time-honoured joke. Dickens talks pleasantly of his kindly but condescending nod to the woodman strolling cottage-wards towards sunset with the axe on his shoulder, when 'father's' wife and children were standing at the cottage-door to gaze at the coach, which served them for a chronometer. With the fair sex he could take senti-

WITH THE FAIR SEX

mental liberties in the way of smiles and winks, without fear of being cast, like Mr. Pickwick, in damages for breach of promise. As the elder Weller boasted, in rather bad taste, to that injured gentleman, the coachman might be in love with a hundred miles of females, without impeachment on his constancy or danger to his purse.

The only writer of reputation, so far as I remember, who heartily abused the class was George Borrow in 'Lavengro.' He represents it as greedy of tips, servilely obsequious to the wealthy and insultingly supercilious to the poor. It is the more surprising that Borrow had a taste for horseflesh, and should have been considered far better company than Tom Pinch when he grew eloquent upon that congenial subject. But Borrow was a man of eccentric genius and violent prejudices, and we can imagine him and a self-opinionated Mr. Weller getting to loggerheads at once over the qualities of Norfolk cobs or the breeding of Suffolk punches. Moreover, the professional dandyism of the younger driving Adonis must have been a standing offence to the gentleman tramp who turned blacksmith, and who invariably preferred legs to wheels. And it must be admitted that the coachman, a self-made man, kept such fashionable and distinguished company that he was tempted to give himself supercilious airs to outsiders. The big squire who sat for the county, or the gay young noble down the road, had booked the box-seat for days in advance. If he had a turn for driving, he took over the reins, and silver or gold changed hands at the leave-taking. David Copperfield had his first fall in life when it was insinuated to him, after handing over one of his few half-crowns, that it would be only decent to change places with the seedy gentleman behind, to whom dogs and horses were meat and drink. We remember how both coachman and passenger were bitterly aggrieved when Sir Pitt Crawley claimed the place which had been secured by the free-handed young gentleman from Oxford. But to do the coachman justice, as a professional connoisseur in the fine arts, there were considerations superior to those of lucre. The object of adoration himself, he was a devout hero-worshipper. He never felt happier or more highly honoured than when he handed the reins to a Barclay and sat admiringly by the side of that matchless Gamaliel. He was never more on his mettle than when he discovered that he was discoursing with an angel in disguise, and subjected to the searching criticism of a 'Nimrod,' with his sublime theories and condescending patronage. I wonder, by the way, if Pomponius Ego, as Mr. Surtees calls him in 'Jorrocks,' favoured his unacademical coaching companions with the stock quotations from the Roman poets which blend with the minutely personal reminiscences of the hospitable friends who gave him entertainment.

Some of the habitual performances of the elderly long-distance drivers may almost rank for power of endurance with the feat of

IF HE HAD A TURN FOR DRIVING HE TOOK OVER THE REINS

Captain Barclay when he did the thousand miles in the thousand hours. But those of the guards were at least as marvellous. Like the coachmen, they were generally well-conditioned men who had matured and hardened in the service. But whereas the coachman, secure in his seat, could envelop himself in box-coats and horse-rugs *à discrétion*, the equally bulky guard had to face the elements in lighter costume. The very tripod on which he perched appeared to have been devised by a paternal administration to chill his legs and keep him wide awake. As Dickens said of the man on the Salisbury mail, a dozen miles an hour were written on his breezy

whiskers. Latterly, the sensational days had gone by when he had an arms-chest, with blunderbuss and horse-pistols within reach, travelling in perpetual apprehension of highwaymen. No longer did the sound of a galloping horse, like that of Jerry Crunch on Shooter's Hill, induce him to give timely warning to the rider to hold his bridle, as he was a devil at a quick shot. Nevertheless, no elderly gentleman in the island more habitually put limbs or life in peril. It was his hourly business to perform feats worthy of an acrobat, swinging with one foot like an ancient Cupid on the slippery step, as he snatched at parcels in passing or handed them down. He would close and lock the hind-boot when the coach was under way, and scramble monkey-like to his perch when it was already progressing at full gallop. Wrists and arms were under the wheels when he was putting on or taking off the drag at a declivity. Or a trace would snap, to the startling of the team, and then he would be down among lively heels in the dark to repair damages with the rope he had ready for the purpose. In black fog or dense snowdrift it was he who had the responsibility of guiding the coach when bearings were being lost and landmarks obliterated. He stuck to the craft so long as steerage was any way practicable, but it was his charge to forward the mails, even if passengers must be left to their luck. It was like cutting the painter and taking to the dingey from a sinking ship in a storm-tossed ocean. In other words, he unharnessed the leaders, mounting barebacked on the one and slinging the mail-bags to the other. Then he set forth on the perilous voyage, of possibly a hundred miles, more or less, in darkness or fitful moonlight, through drifts of snow where the horses sank over the hocks, and over a snow-enveloped country where the highway had disappeared. Some of the deeds of these men in the memorable storm of 1836 were simply heroic, and well deserved the Victoria Cross. More than one of them never recovered the mental and bodily strain, effects of exertions that seemed superhuman. We may wind up with an incident of which we have a vivid recollection, though it occurred in nursery days. A guard who was livid with chill and pain came at late daybreak with frost-bitten hands to a hospitable mansion, to seek—not repose or help from a doctor, but a remount from the stables. The horse he was riding, with the mail-bags balanced on the withers, had come to grief. In fact, he had slipped his foot down the chimney of a cottage, buried out of sight in the snow by the drift of a single night.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

I HAVE received a number of letters with respect to my controversy with 'Ouida' in last month's issue. My correspondents are good enough to express satisfaction with my answer to the lady's strictures on sport, and to supplement the reply; and most of them are eager to protest against the implication that, as sportsmen, they are cruel. I have not space, however, for letters, and I scarcely think that any new points on what I did not touch are advanced. In one matter 'Ouida' was right, several of my friends tell me. There is an estate where 'wooden stands are erected in the drives;' but it can hardly be said that they are placed there so that 'the gunners can hit the pheasants more securely.' In commenting on this last month, I admitted never having heard of these stands, but added that if they existed 'Ouida' 'would doubtless learn that they are put up because the pheasants fly from exceptionally placed covers at such a height that it is absolutely impossible to reach them from the ground.' The estate is Rhiwlas, and I am informed that my supposition is precisely accurate. The birds fly beyond the reach of the guns, and without the stands could never be shot. One of my correspondents wants to know how the autumn and winter months could possibly be passed in England if men did not shoot and hunt, or, at any rate, go in for one of these sports; and to a man who has been always accustomed thus to occupy himself, the problem would doubtless be a hard one. It is very certain that a very large proportion of men with leisure and money would live and spend their incomes abroad. The spell of the Riviera is

exceedingly powerful; Italy is rich in attractions; and Egypt, particularly Cairo, annually grows more and more popular—but I am wandering from my subject.

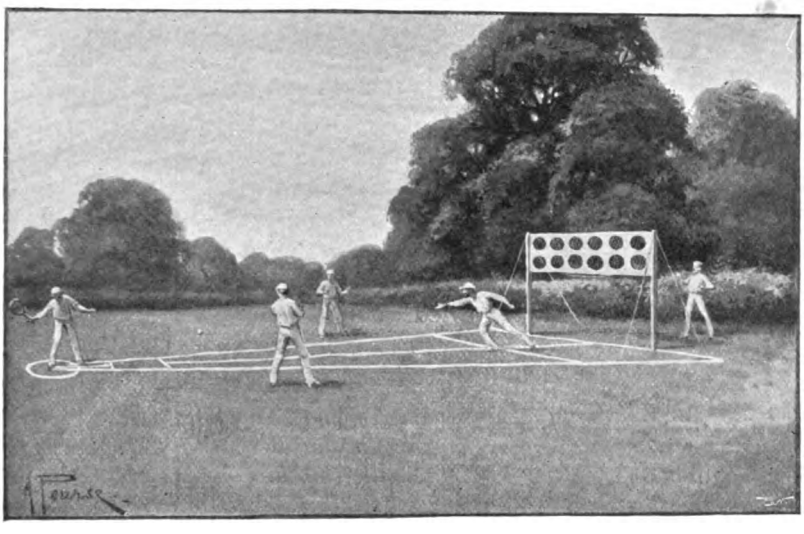
I have good reason to be aware that these pages are read by many friends, known and unknown, who are good enough to take some interest in the writer; and I am tempted to announce to them the forthcoming publication of an illustrated book called 'Racing and 'Chasing,' made up of sporting stories and sketches which I have written from time to time; most of them for 'Holly Leaves,' the Christmas number of the 'Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.' It is curious to read stories written many years ago and quite forgotten: one can judge them impartially as if they were the work of another man; but it would not be becoming to review one's own productions even with the standing example of David Garrick, who 'always wrote his own criticisms,' according to the statement of his wife. Racing stories are almost necessarily on the same main line—they show how the schemes of rascals are, either accidentally or ingeniously, upset to the ultimate benefit of the honest people for whom it is sought to win the sympathy of the reader—the tale of how some equine gem in the rough defeats the highly esteemed jewel of price is far too old to bear repetition, and at least my readers will not find *that* old plot. From the other groundwork, I may remark in strict confidence, it is very hard to escape; and the question is whether an author can hide this similarity of structure by the reality of his descriptions, the ingenuity of his plan, and the interest of his story generally. Not seldom a tale of the turf annoys the reader who understands racing by reason of the author's obvious ignorance of the subject—a most complicated one for anybody who has not actual and intimate experience of it. I have been for so long a time so closely associated with the sport that I hope I shall not offend by shortcomings in that direction; whether the stories fulfil other requirements is for critics and readers to judge. The artists, I may add, are well-known contributors to this magazine, and with very few exceptions all the pictures are new, having been specially drawn for the book.

A very familiar question, but one which is constantly discussed with interest, is again put to me: What should be the proportion

of kills to cartridges in the case of an 'average good shot'? 'It ought not to be a very difficult point to settle,' my correspondent thinks, 'because in the course of the day a man is tolerably certain to have shots of all sorts of degrees of difficulty.' By the 'average good shot,' I assume that he means a man who is good all round; for there are many who are well nigh sure at pheasants—at any rate overhead, though they miss the low skimming birds when these can be safely tried for, usually because they will not hold far enough forward—but very moderate at driven grouse or partridges: as a rule, for the reason just suggested. Not a few men do thoroughly understand that they must aim for the spot where the bird *will be* when the shot reaches it, not at the place where he *was* the moment before they pulled the trigger; but with a perfect comprehension of this all-important fact, they do not put their knowledge into practice. It seems rather odd to me, but I know men who are really good at driven birds, but indifferent at pheasants; and there are those again who cannot shoot rabbits, though fair, if not what may be called really good, at birds. The 'good average,' I imagine, does not approach nearly to the quite first-rate, that very small and select little band whose accuracy is phenomenal, but is a longish way in front of the 'moderate,' which I take to include the very large majority of men who shoot. 'Kills to cartridges'—that is the question. I have my own ideas, and they are influenced by the belief that men generally waste rather more cartridges than they realise, sometimes by difficult shots that they scarcely hope to bring off (especially when sport is poor, and they are keen to kill something), occasionally by putting in an unnecessary second barrel, or for some other reason. I will not give my own estimate this month, however, but will ask readers who shoot a great deal, what their notion is? Kills to cartridges—what is about the figure with an 'average good shot?'

The picture opposite will puzzle readers until they see the explanation of it. The scene represents a new game for two or more players, invented by the artist, Mr. Alfred Pearse, and called Bagball, a name that might be replaced by one more euphonious. The advantages claimed for it are that it can be played in or out-of-doors at any season of the year, that all players are constantly moving without the excessive exercise associated with lawn tennis and such games, that it requires skill in bowling, batting,

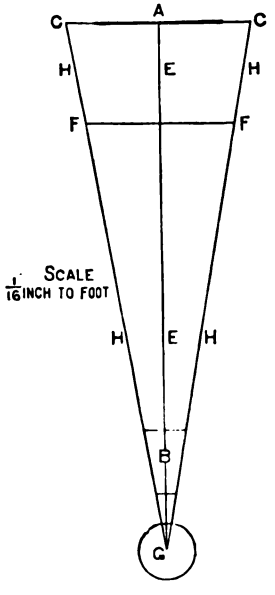
and catching, and that a perfectly level lawn is not a necessity. The game is played with the ordinary lawn tennis balls and



racquets, and a receiving board A, 9 ft. long and 3 ft. wide, which is raised at right angles to the ground by supports, the lowest edge to be 6 ft. 6 in. above the ground.

RULES.—1. The base line C C, above which the 'receiving board' is erected, is to be one-third the length of the centre line E E. The service line F F is one-fifth the length of line E E, away from the base line C C and parallel to it. The border lines H H H H are marked from the ends C C of base line to the extreme end of centre line G. Two lines are marked across the centre line and parallel to service line, one 5 ft. and the other 9 ft. from G; the space between the lines is called the 'rebound.' Taking G as a centre, describe a circle 4 ft. in diameter, to form the striking circle. N.B.—45 ft. is a good length for centre line E E, but it may be shorter or longer. 2. The balls are to be twelve red and twelve white lawn tennis balls, and the game is won by those who first play six balls into the net at back of the receiving board, tennis or lawn tennis racquets being used to strike with. 3. The server, or bowler, stands where the service line crosses the centre line and delivers, underhand, twelve balls into the 'rebound' B (unless the striker is 'out' before the twelve are bowled). Balls

that do not pitch into the 'rebound' are 'no balls,' and if three are bowled in succession it counts one to the striker. 4. The striker stands with one foot within or on the line forming the striking circle, and hits the ball as it rises from the 'rebound,' endeavouring to bat the ball into one of the holes on the 'receiving board.' 5. The striker is out if he misses three properly bowled balls in succession, or if the ball should be caught by an opponent as it rebounds from the 'receiving board,' or by the server, and also when twelve properly bowled balls are delivered. The server always takes the place of striker in turn. 6. When more than two are playing, sides may be chosen, and those not serving or striking should stand 2 ft. at least away from and outside the border lines HHHH to catch the ball as it rebounds from the 'receiving board,' one of each side alternately becoming server and then striker, *i.e.* if A and B are playing C and D, A takes racquet, C serves; when A is out, C takes racquet and B serves; when C is out, B is striker and D serves, and so on. 7. If preferred, the holes can be numbered and net at back of 'receiving board' divided, and the game be won by the first player making 50 points or more.



Letters from some of my friends show that they have been enjoying good sport of late. Mr. John Scott-Montagu, M.P., observes in the course of an epistle from Beaulieu, in Hampshire: 'You might like to know the result of our week's partridge driving here. The figures are:

	Partridges	Other Game	Total
First day	285	35	320
Second day	340	4	344
Third day	690	16	706
Fourth day	366	12	378
	1,681	67	1,748

If it had not been for the wretched partridge disease, "enteritis," I think we should easily have killed a thousand brace in the four

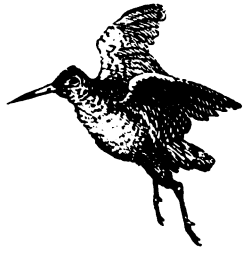
days. However, 345 brace is a very reasonable day, and ought to be good enough for anyone.' And here are some fish caught by Colonel St. Clair, who wrote 'The Griffin in India' in the last number. The north of Ireland was the scene of his sport, and he reminds me that 'the autumn fishing and fish are, of course, not equal to the spring, but,' he adds, 'only three of the fish were not clean run. The 29-pounder was an old, coarse-skinned fish, and had been about a week in the water; two small fish were red; the others were as bright as silver and in splendid condition :—

			lb.	
September 11.—1 fish		. . . . .	14	
„ 13.—3	„	(29 lb., 10½ lb., 9 lb.)	48½	
„ 14.—3	„	(7 lb., 6 lb., 5¾ lb.) .	18¾	
„ 15.—3	„	(20 lb., 11 lb., 4¼ lb.)	35¼	or over 21½ lb. a day for the 8 days.
„ 16.—1	„	. . . . .	22½	
„ 17.—1	„	. . . . .	11¾	
„ 18.—1	„	. . . . .	12	
„ 20.—1	„	. . . . .	10	
14	„		172¾	averaging about 12¼ lb.
On other dates 3	„	(12 lb., 6½lb., 4¾ lb.)	23¼	
17	„		196	caught by self.
„ 3	„	(10½ lb., 10 lb., 7 lb.)	27½	caught by two friends.
Total bag 20	„		223½	or 2 cwt. less ½lb.

Mostly taken with the spoon. Some very large fish were hooked and lost.'

When several of the leading two-year-olds are what is called 'close together'—that is to say, when there does not appear to be much difference between them—as a very general rule it is assumed that the lot are moderate. I am, however, very far from certain that this is at present the case, and my reason is that I know of several which are undoubtedly a very long way from the best, and can yet give a great deal of weight to decent selling-platers that win races. As I have written more than once with scant respect for Orzil, I rather hoped to see him beaten in the Middle Park Plate. His speed is extraordinary beyond doubt, but I never believed for a moment that he would make a Derby horse. The result of the great two-year-old race was to earn golden opinions for Dieudonné, and he won handsomely from what I am convinced was a good field. Three lengths is a great deal to

make up, and Dieudonné beat Disraeli by that considerable margin; but Mr. Wallace Johnstone's colt had been coughing, and consequently stopped in his work, and though the cough was slight, and his trainer did not think it had really done him any harm, one never knows how this may be. Disraeli's superiority to Wildfowler is obvious, for Captain Greer's colt was beaten having an advantage of 3 lb. in the weights. Three pounds does not sound much, but it means a vast deal in such a desperate race as this was—one of the fastest in which the jockeys engaged had ever ridden, they declared. Before these pages are published Dieudonné and Disraeli will probably have met again in the Dewhurst Plate, where the Duke of Devonshire's son of Amphion and Mon Droit will have 3 lb. more than his opponent to carry. If the winner of the Middle Park Plate adds the Dewhurst to his spoils, he will be a strong winter favourite for the Derby. It still remains to be seen whether a young Amphion will be really able to stay, however. At any rate, it is agreeable to think that we have some good two-year-olds; moreover, some that are highly esteemed at home have not yet run.



THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
December 1897

A COMPLETE SPORTSMAN[1]

BY HARRY GRAHAM

THE outpost line of the 1st Brigade had formed into position just outside the small up-country station in the hills, and the hot Indian sun was mercilessly beating down upon the tired troops. Lieutenant Clarence Fitzluce was sitting in his marquee tent, having just finished 'tiffin.' His chair was pushed back from the table, and his crossed legs gave him the satisfied look of a man who has 'messed' wisely and quite well enough. Nothing seemed wanting to complete his happiness. He held between his teeth a gold-tipped cigarette of the best American tobacco, the end of which he had just been engaged in biting off, while ever and anon he would raise to his lips a foaming tumbler of 'crème de menthe,' and, after a long draught, replace it on the table by his side.

He looked just what he was—a typical Guardsman.

His evening dress seemed to fit him like a glove, as though it had been made for him. He was, in fact, a perfect model of what an English gentleman should look, from the frilled front of his full-bottomed shirt, with its large diamond solitaire in the centre, to the pointed toes of his brown elastic-sided 'Wellingtons.' His long fair hair, but lately *ondulé* by his servant, curled gracefully

[1] The author writes to explain that for years past he has been a keen student of some of the leading lady novelists, and though he denies being jealous of their fame, he admits an ardent ambition to emulate it.—ED.

over his turn-down collar behind. His elegant and well-groomed beard seemed to nestle peacefully and picturesquely amid the folds of his cravat, which was of a dark-green colour and tied in so careful a 'butterfly' bow that only the keenest scrutiny would have revealed the fact of its not being a 'made-up' one.

Lieutenant Fitzluce might well look contented as he sat by the mess-table which had so lately been crowded with good cheer. His life had indeed been a successful one. At ten years of age he had matriculated with flying colours into Eton. There, it must be allowed, he was at first inclined to be priggish, and, as the other boys slangily termed it, to 'sass the elder monitors,' and consequently he tasted more than once the red-hot ends of a toasting-fork. This treatment, however, only served to shape his character into a sterner mould, and soon, by dint of rugged perseverance, he became a 'prefect of quad,' and was made head 'præpostor' of 'first form' before he left.

From Eton Fitzluce went to Cambridge, to 'The House,' where his prowess soon gained him his 'flannels' for chess; and here, indeed, his triumphs did not cease until he had thrice steered his college barge to victory at Putney.

After this, in accordance with the wishes of his people, he tried to stand for Parliament; but owing to the scandals concerning his private character which his opponent caused to be circulated in all parts of the borough, he was unanimously blackballed for the Chiltern Hundreds.

This failure was, however, soon made up for when he was given a commission as ensign in the Guards, and in this regiment he soon became one of the most popular officers of his squadron, and was always put in command of a whole section whenever any real work was to be done or at a general's inspection. But now let us return to him as he sits alone in his spacious marquee.

It was evident from his attitude that he was waiting for something or somebody, and very soon his patience was rewarded. He hurriedly put out his cigarette as the rustling of a silk gown was heard without, and in another moment his bâtman entered the tent and announced in a low tone of voice, 'Lady Milicia Carlew.'

As the fair form of his lady visitor filled the doorway of his tent, Fitzluce rose hastily and ran towards her with outstretched hands.

'How good of you to come!' he whispered, as he helped her to remove her opera cloak. 'I was getting so bored here all alone. *Ça m'embêtait!*'

'Il y en a de quoi,' she replied, seating herself upon an ottoman

near the window and slowly peeling off her gloves with the aid of a spoon.

'Lady Milicia'—it was Fitzluce who fractured the silence—'will you forgive me for not being in uniform?'

She looked up at him with a smile which might have made a less conceited man proud. 'Don't mention it, Lieutenant,' she said; 'I always think you look so well in mufti mess-kit.'

'My other things are packed,' he resumed, ignoring her well-paid compliment, 'for I have just applied to the Major for a month's furlough. I start for Scotland to-morrow.'

He watched her narrowly to see what effect this announcement would have on her, but she maintained her composure with an effort.

'Scotland?' she murmured, 'to shoot, fish, hunt! Oh, you men! when will you be happy without your so-called sport?'

There was an awkward pause for a moment or two, at the end of which Lady Milicia looked up with a nervous laugh. 'I suppose you are off to slaughter the home-reared grouse?' she said, and she made no attempt to conceal the contempt she felt for such a pursuit.

'Not I,' replied the Guardsman. 'Sport—that is to say, "sport" as it is nowadays understood by a race of barbarians—sport and I have parted company years ago. I have long given up shooting and fishing for many reasons, chiefly because I think it wrong to destroy life in any form.'

'How I admire you for it!' the lady whispered. 'Ah! if only other men were like you!' She paused. 'But won't you tell me by what means you were brought to this way of thinking?' She spoke in that pretty beseeching tone which he had always found so difficult to refuse.

'I have never told anybody before,' he answered, 'but since you command it, I, of course, obey.' Lady Milicia bowed low and smiled encouragingly.

Fitzluce seated himself near her on the ottoman, so near that she could feel his hot breath upon her cheek, and ever and anon, as he got more and more excited in his recital, he would lift her tiny hand to his lips and smother it with ill-disguised caresses.

'You know what the world means by the word "sportsman,"' he began. She nodded assent. 'Well,' he went on, 'I was once as keen a sportsman as anybody. But an incident occurred some years ago which changed all my tastes, which altered all my feelings and inclinations in the matter. I, the pet of the regiment, the bosom friend of my brother officers, the crack card-player of

the mess'—he pulled his moustache furtively—'I renounced sport and all its adjuncts.'

He was silent for a moment, and then resumed the thread.

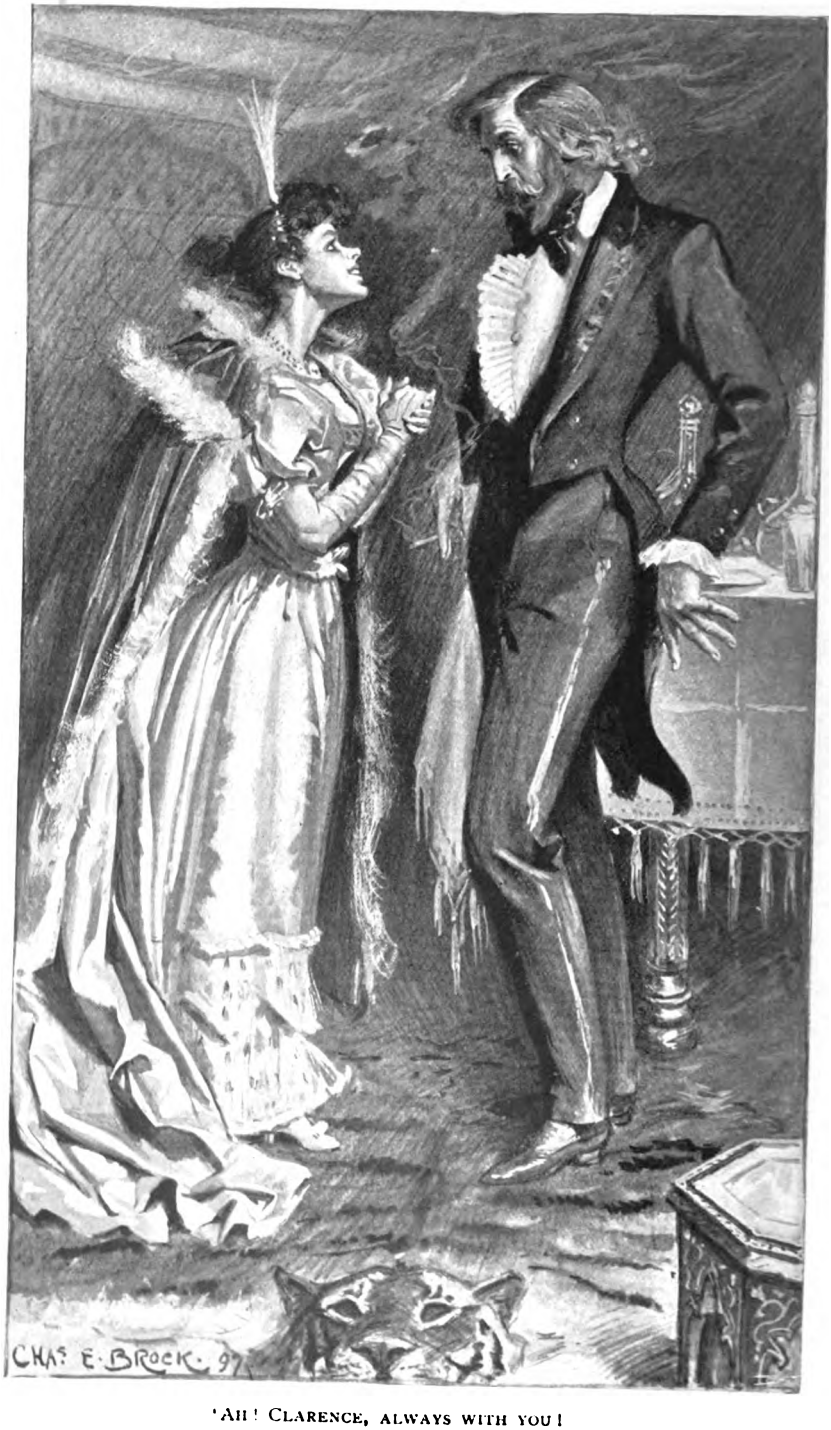
'And why did I do this?' he said. 'I will tell you, if you care to listen.'

Thus addressed Lady Milicia glanced up at the speaker, and her handsome eyes expressed the deepest interest, though a casual observer might have noticed her attempt to stifle a yawn with qualified success.

Fitzluce went on unchecked.

'I was snipe-fishing one day off Spithead,' he said; 'a friend of mine living in the neighbourhood had given me a mount, and I rode quietly along to the green on the bridoon. My rod, which I carried across my back in its bag, was a twelve-bore with sliding seats, and as I was always a careful man I had taken the precaution of chalking the tip. I had no wish to be fined for cutting divots out of the cloth,' he added with a laugh.

He paused to light a cigarette, and then resumed. 'I can remember the whole scene now, as if it were only yesterday. It was Christmas-time, and the oak trees were just in flower. All around me the martingales were singing in the hedgerows, and an occasional snaffle would call to his mate in the copse. At the first fence I was spot-barred, but by a lucky chance I managed to cannon in off the red during the next over, and found myself leading with two up and one to play. A flock of shrimps came over the bunker just as I was loading, and I had only time to get a brace with the first barrel and a leash with the second. We were rather short of room in the butt, and my loader got stymied through giving me a miss in baulk. I saw my mistake in time, however, and changed my fly to one of Eley's smokeless "Jock Scotts." Here, again, I was unlucky, for when the next wisp of pheasants ran across the ride to my left I topped them, struck a little too soon, before they had had time to gorge the tackle, and made a miss into the top pocket. At that moment a hare came out of his burrow just in front of me and made for the nearest tree. I don't shoot hares as a rule, because I think it a cruel sport'—'Noble man!' murmured Lady Milicia—'and partly because I can't hit them unless they keep very still. So I pretended not to notice the animal and teed up at once, managing a losing hazard with the driving iron on the port side. It was then that my retriever, who had been ranging in front, attracted my attention. He was pointing anxiously at the pool which I had just left, and, as I had long suspected it of being the lair of a cover of grey hens and was



'AH! CLARENCE, ALWAYS WITH YOU!

anxious to brown them, I spotted the red and drove off without delay. I shall never forget the sight that met my gaze as I slowly paddled up to the spot.

'An old dog-snipe, who had evidently been missed by the pack, had just hobbled in to his "form" with his tail between his legs, and was engaged in helping his wife to count their eggs and tidy the place up a bit for the night. The almost human expression of the wren-snipe as she welcomed her master home went straight to my heart. One could almost imagine her asking him what he had been doing that brought him back so late, and saying, "No, Jack, dear; this is the third time this week that you have excused yourself on the grounds of being hunted, but it won't wash!" I tell you, Lady Milicia, it made me think a bit; 'pon my soul it did. Here was an animal who cared for her husband and eggs just like any human being. I never had the nerve to kill another snipe. It was the last run of the season, and I took care that they should never tee off from my coverts again. Do you wonder now why I am not what the world calls a sportsman?'

'I do not,' Lady Milicia answered in that sweet voice of hers whose softness coincided so exactly with the state of her head.

'Sport, indeed!' Fitzluce went on with disdain. 'Why, I remember the time when I used to shoot my father, the Earl's, pheasants. Day after day did I blaze away at them, and they liked it. When the shot fell round them they were under the impression that they were being fed, and would come back and ask for more.'

'Ah! Lieutenant,' said Lady Milicia, 'how few men there are like you! You are the true type of sportsman!' She rose to her feet, began buttoning up her gloves, and then seemed to suddenly change her mind.

'I am sorry that you must be going,' said Lieutenant Fitzluce.

'But I am not going,' replied the lady.

'Not going?'

Fitzluce was so simple, so innocent, such a fatheaded ass altogether.

'No, Lieutenant,' she said; 'I intend to live here always. Ah! Clarence, always with you!'

Poor Clarence!

His jaw fell with a dull thud on to his chest, but he quickly recovered himself, poured out another tumblerful of brandy, and drained it at a gulp.

'Damn!' he said, in his quiet, earnest way.

. . . . . .

The somewhat oppressive silence which had necessarily

followed the Guardsman's last remark was brought to an end by the sudden appearance of a young man in uniform, who burst abruptly into the tent without knocking.

'Hullo, Clarence, old man!' said the new-comer; then, observing the lady, 'I beg pardon,' he added, removing his bearskin busby, 'I thought you were alone.'

He was preparing to go when Fitzluce called him back.

'All right, Lord Hurstpark,' he said (adding *sotto voce*, for Lady Milicia's benefit, 'Our new sub., you know'). 'What is it you want?'

'Oh, it don't matter,' answered Lord Hurstpark, with that total disregard for grammar which is so often met with amongst the 'best people.' 'I'm off cub-shooting to-morrow, and, as I've sent my bâtman up to the bank with my month's pay, I was going to ask you if you'd let your man varnish my rifle and oil my cartridges and things.'

'Delighted, dear boy,' was Fitzluce's ready answer. 'I'll give instructions.'

'Good-night,' he continued, as Lord Hurstpark seemed to be preparing to make a prolonged visit.

'Oh, er—er—good-night,' the young man replied, somewhat abashed, and with a bow to the lady he set his bearskin in the customary rakish manner over his left ear, and hurried out into the night.

There was silence in the tent.

Both its occupants had a good deal to think about, and they thought about it.

The woman was wondering to herself whether she really loved this man, or whether it was merely his exquisite beauty and grace that appealed so deeply to her sensitive nature. The man was thinking, naturally enough, of the woman, and asking himself whether he should accept her or wait until he had come into his earldom and perhaps pick up something better. He sat for some time looking steadfastly into her face.

And what a face it was! Lady Milicia's features were too irregular to be really beautiful; perhaps her mouth was a little too large, her teeth a little too uneven and decayed, and her hair a little too scanty to allow of her ranking among the most handsome women of her own or any other day. But this was made up for to a great extent by the serious, sympathetic cynicism of her grave green eyes, the hearty *je ne sais quoi* of her silent upturned nose. It was a face that showed intelligence and ambition, the face of a woman with a purpose.

Even her enemies allowed that it was the sort of face that grew on one, though each of them might add, beneath his breath, 'Thank heaven it doesn't grow on me!'

Lady Milicia's philanthropy was a household word in the village of Puddingford, where she was an heiress in her own right.

She did good and ensued it. Her whole existence was a sort of triumphal philanthropic march. She would open a new battleship one day and inaugurate a church another, while she was always ready to promote a bazaar or lay the foundation-stone of a fried-fish shop to be worked on temperance principles. She had even instituted a colony of Italians somewhere in the East End, who collected money for her charitable purposes. She started these foreigners as purveyors of ice-cream or itinerant musicians, and of the latter it might truly be said that 'though their organs grind but slowly, yet they grind exceeding loud.'

Lady Milicia's estate in Yorkshire, the old family seat of the Carlews from time immemorial, though only about one hundred acres in extent, produced a large variety of game.

Woodcook, coots, bandicoots, grouse, field-fare, ptarmigan, teal, pigeon, widgeon, nightjars, capercailzie, water-rats and red, white, and blue hares abounded. Owls and otters were also fairly numerous, while among the various forms of sport which the place provided, were pea-shooting, paddling, fishing and fried fishing, trawling with a dry worm for crabs, sculling the house-boat, archery, and the use of the puff-dart. From this it can easily be understood that Lady Milicia had many suitors to her hand, but hitherto all had been equally unsuccessful. It was even rumoured that a certain Exalted Personage, who ought to have known better, had for twenty-five years proposed marriage to her with amazing perseverance, and still persisted, although the lady had been heard to remark that she wouldn't be seen dead in the same public-house with him. But, as they say in Paris, 'If the cap fits, *bon voyage*!'

Suddenly Fitzluce roused himself from his lethargy.

'Qui hi!' he shouted in Hindustani, and clapped his hands. His *kummerbund*, or native servant, entered at once. Fitzluce told him sharply to get the *jinriksha* ready in ten minutes. 'Baa, sahib,' answered the man, salaaming heavily. The Lieutenant went on, still using the language of the country, 'Komartovit,' he said, 'bring the *shut* jinriksha, and mind it isn't late.'

'The sahib's commands shall be obeyed,' answered the man, 'inarpha mow kokki.'

In five minutes' time the carriage was at the door and Fitzluce had helped Lady Milicia into it and taken his seat by her side.

As he seized the reins, one in each hand, the *khitmagar* (or groom), sprang away from the horse's head, and the noble animal, a blue-bay thoroughbred mare marked by a white star on its tail, dashed away into the darkness with the crupper between his teeth.

On and on they drove, the silence only broken now and again by the roaring of the hard-pressed steed, who, alas! was not so young as she used to be, having had two bad attacks of 'clavicular' in the withers, and but lately been fired for a slight touch of 'housemaid's knee.'

At last Fitzluce looked up and addressed his companion.

'Do you really mean to marry me?' he asked; and what an effort those simple words cost him!

'Clarence!' shrieked the lady, and the surrounding landscape re-echoed with the name, 'I do!'

Almost before she had finished her sentence the horse stopped dead short at the very brink of a precipice; the noble beast had not seen it before owing to the darkness, but some instinct had told him that it would be madness to proceed.

Fitzluce rose in his seat and gazed searchingly into the yawning chasm beneath.

Then, with a sudden movement, he lifted his fair companion out of the carriage and moved forward with her to within a foot of the edge.

Lady Milicia felt his hand and tried to free herself.

'Don't,' she murmured, with a smile that withered the vegetation for miles around, 'you'll ruffle my fringe.'

But Fitzluce only strode closer to the brink.

Her cry of terror was smothered by his cold nose laid against hers as they fell forward into the air.

With a crash the two bodies descended upon the head of the village idiot, who was tending his flocks in the valley below.

The two backbones snapped together in perfect unison.

And the village idiot, remarking that it was quite a shower after the rain, strode away into the wind.

THE TWO BACKBONES SNAPPED TOGETHER IN PERFECT UNISON

A BICYCLE TOUR ON THE RIVIERA

BY CONSTANCE EVERETT-GREEN

THERE can be no pleasanter way of seeing the Riviera than by making a tour along the beautiful and well-known coast road which for so many miles runs almost parallel with the sea.

As those who travel by rail know well, the train constantly enters long tunnels, which shorten the mileage but spoil the view. The cyclist, on the contrary, though he ascends and descends many hills and rounds point after point, almost invariably enjoys a beautiful view in both directions, and is repaid for the toil of climbing a hill by the pleasant run down on the other side.

The part of the Riviera over which my tour extended was that which lies between Genoa on the east and Cannes on the west, a distance of about 150 miles.

With the exception of the western slope of the upper road between Mentone and Nice, known as La Grande Corniche, there was not a single hill which was dangerous to ride down, and there were very many which were easy to ride up. 'Coasting' was often practicable for short distances, but the frequent turns in the road rendered it inadvisable to allow the machine to get out of hand. I think I only twice used my break in the 300 miles, once when overtaking a flock of sheep, and once to avoid running over a dog. The French part of the road is better kept than the Italian. In either country one frequently finds the road heavily stoned, but generally there is a choice of smooth tracks for a bicycle.

The first few miles west of Genoa are not agreeable riding, as the suburbs extend a long way, and it is not till the popular bathing resort of Pegli is passed and the manufacturing centres of Pra and Voltri are also left behind, with their tram lines and traffic, that one feels to be really remote from towns. Then

follows a beautiful stretch of country, not only with a fine view of headlands and sea, but also frequent striking panoramas which open up inland, showing ranges of mountains and now and then a snow-capped peak. The picturesque village of Arenzano makes a pleasant halting-place (ten chilometri from Pegli), and not far off is the village of Cogoleto, the supposed birthplace of Columbus. It is a typical Italian coast village, consisting of one long, narrow, paved street with high houses on either side, many coloured, each inhabited by various families. The shade of the street is delicious after the sunny road, and it is refreshing as well as necessary to ride slowly along the irregular pavement, keeping a sharp look-out so as to avoid collision with pedestrians who may suddenly step out from any doorway. There is no footpath, or no road—whichever way you like to put it—the space from house to house being paved with large rectangular stones set diamond-wise. The shops and houses resemble cellars, which open on the street like so many archways. Some of the wares are exposed within and some on the pavement.

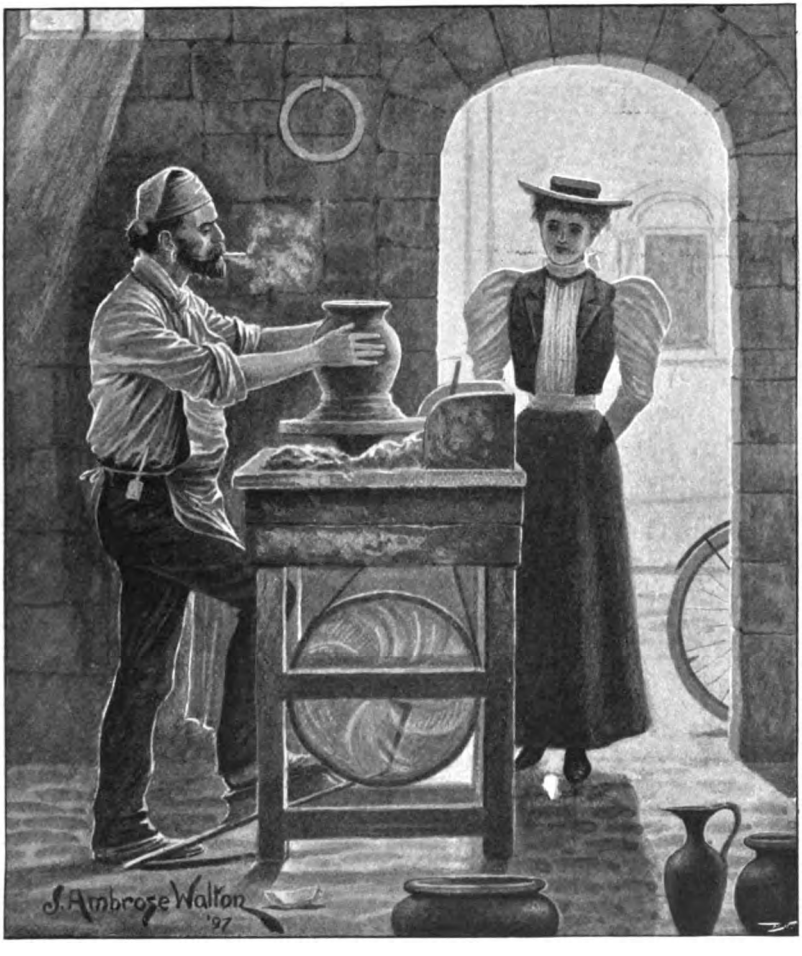
Oranges and lemons with their stalks and leaves still on are for sale every few yards. A penny buys from two to five oranges, according to the place and state of the market, and in Italy one soon acquires the habit of eating six or eight in a day, and most refreshing they are to the thirsty. A usual drink of the country, and a pleasant one, is 'Vermouth e seltz,' price twopence. More thirst-quenching still is 'seltz pure,' with a fresh lemon squeezed into it.

The reputed house of Columbus bears a tablet to his memory, and is still shown when desired. The beach is occasionally visible through a little gap in the houses, with picturesque and many-coloured boats lying about, and the usual débris of a fishing village. Cogoleto is soon passed, and after another fine view inland, where one of the numerous streams comes down from the mountains, we reach Varazze, a boat-building place, like Pra, but without any traffic or dirt. Beautiful stretches of sand are passed from time to time, and often the fishermen are to be seen hauling the seine, as we call it, women and children alike dragging at the net to a rhythmical sing-song cry.

The little village of Albissola, the next place of interest, is entirely given up to the making of pots. The clay is found in the neighbourhood and worked in the houses of the peasants. The hum of the potter's wheel soon causes a dismount, and I pause and step inside an open cellar and watch the fascinating operation of the shaping of a lump of clay. It is just what they

ORANGES AND LEMONS ARE FOR SALE EVERY FEW YARDS

show you at Sèvres—the simple wheel, and the shape growing under the potter's hand. A pleasant smile, and a 'Buon giorno, signora,' and the wheel hums on peacefully, while I pick my way forward again, carefully among the pots. The great drying ground is the already sufficiently narrow street. Pots of all shapes and



I WATCH THE SHAPING OF A LUMP OF CLAY

sizes are laid out five or six in a row on short planks. These planks are carried out from the workshops and laid down on either side of the street. There are drain pipes, too, and large water-pots, but most of them are moderately small and present a great variety of shapes. Presumably these plank loads are carried

off to the kilns to be baked, but meanwhile one rides through a quarter of a mile of continuous pots.

The next part of the ride may well be missed in a narrative, as it is disagreeable and uneventful. The approach to Savona is pretty, but Savona itself and its hideous suburb Formaci are best hurried through, unless a meal or a bed is wanted.

At the Capo di Vado, on looking back beyond the smoke of the furnaces, the whole bay of Genoa can be seen. Past Bergeggi there is a pretty island with the remains of a building on it, lying quite near to the shore.

All along the Riviera the rail and the road constantly cross and recross every few miles, yet such a thing as an unguarded level crossing is unknown; there is always a small house, generally painted yellow, with a number written up in bold figures. The man or woman in charge swings a great wooden arm across the road when a train is expected. Carts wait patiently, and the Italian pedestrian—to whom, as a rule, time is no object—generally waits too; but no objection was ever made to my ducking under the barrier, or wheeling my machine through a narrow footway sometimes left at the side. I have often passed two or three such barriers before meeting with the train that was 'due.'

After passing Capo di Noli with its picturesque old castle perched up on the rock, and Varigotti, another headland, a long flat stretch of coast leads to Finalmarina, a place of some importance, with a cathedral by Bernini. Here it is possible to sleep or have a good meal. The distance from Genoa is about forty-seven miles. Finalmarina suffered severely in the earthquake, signs of which may still be seen. There are several interesting caves in the rocks in this neighbourhood, which are worth a visit from those who are not pressed for time.

From Finalmarina westward the road is comparatively level, and it is easy running past Pietra Liguria Loano, the squalid village of Ceriale, and on to Albenga, formerly a place of very considerable importance, though now quite a modest little town. Before entering Albenga, the road runs past the interesting remains of an ancient Roman bridge, of which a considerable number of arches remain. The river, however, has long since left its former channel, and is not here in sight. There is a very fine old church at Albenga, with a curious red brick tower and odd bits of ancient stone carving; also a queer, dark, and more ancient baptistery, both of which well repay a visit. Turning to the right, the road then runs over a bridge paved with wood,

which spans the narrow stream and the wide bed of grey stones, so typical of the rivers in this part of the country. Here again a dismount should be made, as the view of the mountains on the right, which has been increasingly fine for several miles, now reaches its culminating point. The banks of the river are used as a washing ground by the Albenga women, many of whom may usually be seen picturesquely grouped close by the bridge on the right bank of the river.

From Albenga, a long and gentle ascent followed by a gentle descent leads, after five miles, to Alassio, a pleasant winter resort much frequented by English, possessing several hotels and an English church and chaplain. Many beautiful walks may be taken from Alassio, and also a pleasant afternoon expedition may be made by boat to the neighbouring island of Gallinaria, where Roman narcissi grow wild in great abundance.

Alassio is fifty-seven miles from Genoa and twenty-seven miles from San Remo. Napoleon, it is said, when off the coast, called Alassio 'la ville longue,' from the great length of its one narrow street, stretching along the sandy shore. Its length can also be well seen from the mountains behind, which make a picturesque background for the numerous villas dotted all around the neighbourhood.

From Alassio the coast road runs past the villages of Laigueglia, Andora, Cervo, Diana Marina, to Oneglia, a place of some importance but of no interest, and then passes through the picturesque seaport of Porto Maurizio. A pleasant halt can be made on the terrace overlooking the quay, where the soldiers are generally drilling, and vessels can be seen entering or leaving the harbour. The exit from Porto Maurizio is down a very wide picturesque street, full of shops. Here the cyclist should provision himself, for he will not have another opportunity till he reaches San Remo, fourteen miles off. The intervening portion of the road is uninteresting, and only includes two villages of any importance; but at San Remo we are in a town which can provide for any English want.

The most interesting part of San Remo is not the new town and shops, nor the public garden full of palms, nor the promenade, which is rather spoilt by the close proximity of the railroad running between it and the sea. Better worth seeing than any of these is the very interesting and ancient old town, lying on the slope of the hill behind. As I walked up and up the old street, which grows ever narrower and darker, passes under various arches, and threatens every moment to end in a cul-de-sac, I

could not help wondering whether I were not trespassing upon regions unknown to any but the inhabitants thereof. However, at last full daylight returned, and I reached a lofty platform on which stands a large and handsome church. It is possible to descend by another route, but one visit at least should be made to the old town, which is the most curious of any on the Riviera. The archways which here and elsewhere join the houses standing opposite to each other at intervals along the old streets, are for greater security in time of earthquake, and are said to be very effectual in resisting the shock.

From San Remo to Bordighera is but five miles. The date palm is seen at its best here, and again the old town behind is interesting, and a pleasant terrace leads up to it. Bordighera is quite a small place compared with San Remo, but its long, clean, sunny street and pleasant aspect make it a favourite resort with those who do not love towns. The sea-shore is, however. very desolate.

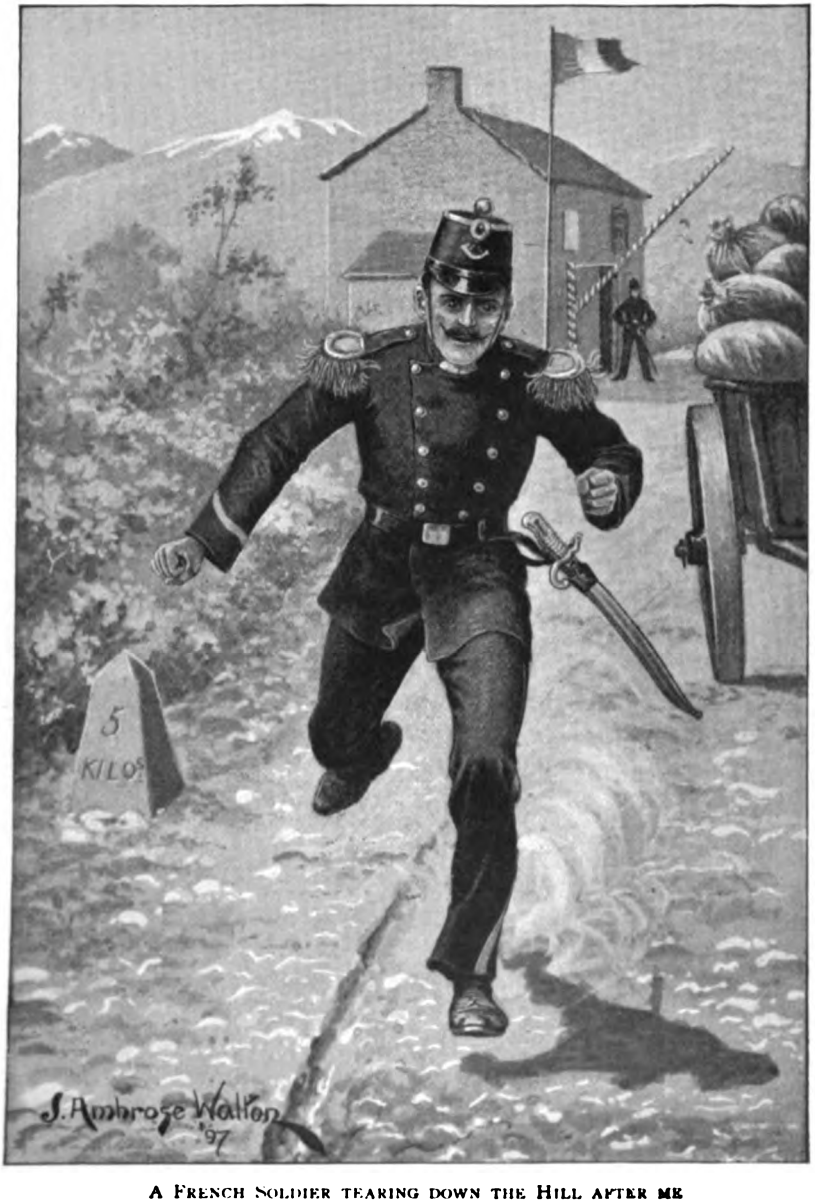
Bordighera, Nervia, and Ventimiglia almost run one into another, with their suburbs and villas scattered along six miles of flat shore; and then, after pausing on the bridge at Ventimiglia for the view inland, we turn to the left, climb the steep street of the last town in Italy, and up and up to the Capo. The road for the next four miles is very hilly. At the village of La Mortola is Mr. Hanbury's celebrated garden, full of all the typical Riviera vegetation at its best, beside much that is interesting and foreign. The garden is open to the public on certain afternoons.

After a little more climbing, the frontier between France and Italy is reached. Travellers by train are examined by the customs officers at Ventimiglia, but travellers by road undergo that formality a mile before reaching Mentone, passing first the Dogana Italiana, and then, a little lower down the hill, the Douane Française.

The usual formality in regard to bicycles is that on entering a foreign country you pay a deposit of about forty or fifty francs, which is refunded when you leave that country. The membership ticket of the cycling clubs of France and Italy frees cyclists from this formality, and the English C.T.C. ticket performs the same good office for members entering France. I thought therefore that I should have free re-entry into Italy on the hired Italian machine I was riding, and free entry into France by reason of my membership in the Cyclists' Touring Club. At any rate, I was determined to try.

I rode very slowly past the Italian customs officers, and

looked at them inquiringly, but they gave no sign. So I rode on down the hill to the French station, where a number of carts



A FRENCH SOLDIER TEARING DOWN THE HILL AFTER ME

were waiting and much conversation was going on. I was stopped, of course. I dismounted and offered my trifling luggage

for inspection. This was declined with a smile, but I was asked if I had any seal or papers for my machine. I said no; but I believed the ticket of my English club franked me, and produced it, saying all French custom houses had received a similar ticket. The head officer was called, looked at the ticket, shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, and said he had received only the French and Italian club tickets; but would I put myself in the shade and wait a few minutes, perhaps the custom house lower down would know my English ticket. So I stood aside and began cleaning my machine, as I generally do before taking it in to an hotel, and I meant to spend that night at Mentone. After some delay I heard called out, 'La bicyclette peut descendre;' so, imagining a telephone message had been sent down about me, I mounted the machine and sped down the hill. The carts were all starting at the same moment, and there was an immense amount of shouting, as is usual with foreign carters. But just as I was about to disappear round the first corner, I distinguished in the midst of the hubbub the cry, 'Arrêtez, arrêtez la bicyclette!' I pulled up, dismounted, and looked back, and immediately perceived a French soldier tearing down the hill after me. I held up my hand, and he slackened speed, and shortly afterwards reached me breathless: 'Mais, Mademoiselle, ce n'est qu'une simple formalité, mais il faut que nous arrivions ensemble, là bas, et comme je ne suis pas en bicyclette, moi—— !' It was most reasonable; so I waited and let the soldier and carts go some distance down the hill before I followed and overtook them, arriving first at the usual inevitable level crossing. The man beckoned me through and held a gate open, and, forgetting I was in custody, I went on, but immediately looked back to see if my soldier was agitated.

He was. He was running again, and once more rejoined me breathless: 'Ce n'est qu'une simple formalité, mais il me faut garder aussi mes charrettes, et comme elles ne peuvent pas passer la barrière—— !' Very good; I would wait there, where he could see me till the train passed, and then, as the road was much less steep, I would walk the rest of the way. I sat down on the wall, pulled a piece of chocolate out of my pocket and began to eat. This satisfied him, and he returned to his carts, still keeping an eye on me, and probably suffering agonies when the train for a few minutes concealed me from his sight. And so at last we fulfilled the 'simple formalité' and arrived together at the lower custom house. My case was at once explained. I showed my C.T.C. ticket, which was recognised, and whilst my soldier and the superior still conversed volubly over my case, I dived into my

pocket and gradually shook out the many folds of my passport (which was not at all to the point), and at this culminating stage of the ceremony the bows and smiles began, and I was allowed to proceed.

Mentone pleased me very much. The beautiful stretch of sea with the east and west bays, and the utter absence of railway train and lines—which are usually so conspicuous along the Riviera—the fine coast view to the east, and, again, Cap Martin with its pine woods on the west, all make up a pretty picture which is not readily forgotten. In the east bay there is a harbour where yachts can anchor, and along the west bay is the gay promenade and public gardens, with the main street and the flower market behind. I spent two pleasant days at the Hôtel d'Italie, up above the road in the east bay, where I was very comfortable, and whence I took two interesting walks to Castellar and to St. Agnese, strange little fortified villages, perched up at an almost impossible height on mountain-tops.

The most beautiful and the most celebrated part of the Corniche road lies between Mentone and Nice. There is an upper and a lower road, known as the Grande and Petite Corniche. For carriages it is best to take the upper road to Nice, a very long, gentle slope out from Mentone, and a much steeper descent from La Turbie at the top. But cyclists should leave Mentone by the lower road and return from Nice by the upper. Thus they walk up the steep slope and ride safely down the gentle descent.

For those who do not wish to spend much time gambling at Monte Carlo, a few hours there will suffice. Starting from Mentone after breakfast, and riding round Cap Martin and the beautiful road by the gardens of the hotel, we soon come out on a fine well-kept coast road which leads us to Monte Carlo in an hour. There it is best to give up the bicycle for a time and walk about on the terrace and the well-kept gardens of the Casino. About 11 A.M. these are thronged with people of all languages and nationalities.

Passing out of the brightness and beauty of the gardens outside, I entered the Casino, and on presenting a visiting card, received a ticket for one day, which has to be shown to the porters who guard the doors of the gambling rooms. Within all is quiet, orderly, and sombre. All the tables are soon filled, and round each is a ring of people one or two deep, who stand and play or watch, as they like. The whirr of the wheel, the clink of the money, and the numbers &c. called are the only sounds to

be heard. There is an intentness and concentration of aspect about the players, but no emotion is displayed, no exclamations are heard, as the ball makes its final leap and the money changes hands. A great many ladies play, and especially old ladies, and the regular *habitués* secure seats and behave in a most business-like manner. It is said that men in cycling dress (knickerbockers) are not admitted even in the morning, and of course ladies 'en culottes' are also refused; but I had no difficulty in obtaining admission in my plain cycling clothes.

Lunch at one of the cafés being eaten, a short ride of ten minutes brings one to the foot of the little kingdom of Monaco, picturesquely perched up on a rocky promontory. Leaving the bicycle behind, I mounted the long and easy flight of shallow steps, and, passing under the gateway of the fortress, came out upon the platform where the little army drills, and on to which the Prince's palace opens. A pleasant hour may be loitered away in strolling through the gardens and walks which overhang the sea, and in exploring the numerous tiny paths descending to some fresh point of view. The brown rock, the blue sea below, and the prickly pear hanging on to the face of the cliff are not readily forgotten; and the luxuriant growth of the pink ivy geranium in the flower beds, the handsome church, still building, all leave a mark upon the memory. We quit Monaco by walking through the main street and out again upon the platform, having thus made a tour of the kingdom, and descend the wide *salita* to the road.

Then a few miles of beautiful coast scenery brings us to the little railway station of Eze, and a group of cottages and a café. Eze itself is perhaps the most curious of all the numerous villages perched up on almost impossible heights. The climb only takes an hour, and the view from the top of the old castle terrace is wonderful, with the upper Corniche road landwards, and seawards the peninsula on which Beaulieu stands, the beautiful natural harbour of Villefranche, and, beyond, the Bay of Nice, all lying at one's feet. Those who have not visited Castellar, St. Agnese, or Gorbio, from Mentone, are strongly advised to take the much easier climb to Eze. The path leaves the high road a little before the station (east), and is marked by a notice board. Eze is on the top of a little conical hill, from which the ground slopes away rapidly in all directions. A good walker can 'do' Eze and be in the saddle again in from two to two and a half hours.

A few more miles brings us to Beaulieu, a favourite excursion from Nice, which is four miles further on. Here it is not always

easy to meet with vacant quarters, and prices are high. However, I found a room at the third hotel to which I applied, and was moderately comfortable.

Next morning a beautiful ride—with the fine harbour of Villefranche on one's left hand, with the French warships anchored in line, and the bugles sounding—brought me to Nice. It is possible to ride through the main streets direct, or, by keeping to the left, to ride round by the harbour and quay to the pleasant sea front, promenade, and gardens. This is a very gay scene at eleven or twelve o'clock in the morning. Not only is the promenade crowded with well-dressed people, as at Monte Carlo, but the carriage road is full of vehicles of all sorts. Soldiers and civilians on horseback, cyclists innumerable, French ladies bent double over the handle-bar, their wide knickerbockers fluttering in the wind; learners, supported by a mounted instructor, hot and earnest; English ladies carrying parasols, as at Mentone, all crowd together in a gay throng. There is room and to spare for all, and even for the whirring motors, which go rattling by with much blowing of horns, leaving a long train of oily smell behind.

All this gaiety is soon passed as I ride on towards Antibes. The road is straight and dusty and the sea is out of sight on the left. Cagne is left behind, and I go steadily on for a couple of hours, generally on a level road, and often cheered by beautiful views inland, till at last the land of gardens is reached, and riding through the main street of Antibes, I wonder where to alight for lunch. Still wondering, I rode on and out to the end of the stone pier, where the fine view of the snow mountains is finest. Then, close to the station and right in front of the view, I came upon a café and there fared excellently in a trellis arbour outside, beside my machine, for which a stand was brought out with much *empressement*.

From Antibes to Cannes is about twelve miles of country not unlike that between Nice and Antibes, and certainly much less attractive than the coast road to which I had become so much used. After riding so many days by the sea one misses it a good deal; but I must not forget to mention the beauty and luxuriance of the mimosa trees which grow here very freely and overhang most of the garden walls, scenting all the air with their fragrance.

Cannes is a large town with excellent shops, the main street running parallel with the sea front and extending for a considerable distance. Then comes the harbour and pier and the old town at the west end on a small hill. Opposite lies the island of

St. Honorat, to which steamers ply daily. All around Cannes, and on the road to it, are innumerable villas, inhabited by residents and visitors.

As Cannes did not attract me specially, and the afternoon was dull and sunless, I determined to ride on to Grasse, about twelve miles inland. Turning to the right before reaching the old town, I climbed the hill which passes by the cemetery so beautifully situated, and thus on, up and up to Grasse. The final climb is tedious, not very steep, but long. Sometimes I rode and then again I walked, till finally I entered the beginning of the street which gradually straggles up the hillside to the large open square. Still no sign of hotels, and I began to feel nervous, as the place looked none too clean, and was certainly very queer and old-fashioned. Naturally my North Italy Baedeker had not gone so far beyond the limits of Italy as Grasse, and I had taken matters for granted. I inquired at a shop—'Oh, yes, there were two grand hotels higher up.' So on I went, and soon found two humble inns. I selected the Poste at hazard and went in. The people were rather surprised but quite pleased to see me, and apparently I had my choice of all the bedrooms in the house, from No. 1 upwards.

I strolled out again just before dusk, and, still walking uphill, soon reached a beautiful wide white road, commanding a noble view of mountains of all heights and shapes and a glimpse of sea beyond. Then I began to understand where the charm of Grasse lies. Beautiful villas are built upon this road at intervals. The little white pyramidal stones by the roadside soon told me it was a national, not a municipal road, and I determined (if possible) to return that way next day; for Grasse was the limit of my wanderings, and the eastward ride back was about to begin. Grasse is a great place for scents, as Antibes is for cut flowers and plants; but the view of the nursery gardens by the roadside in either neighbourhood is not specially prepossessing. My modest inn gave me an excellent dinner, and there were many guests at table who seemed to be of the genus commercial traveller.

Next morning I received excellent accounts of the 'Route Victoria' which had pleased me overnight, and which would take me back to Nice *viâ* Cagne, but not by Cannes or Antibes. It was a delightful ride. The panorama of mountains was beautiful, sometimes to the south, sometimes to the north, and sometimes varied by peaceful miles of olive terraces. The slope was gentle and in my favour nearly the whole way. It took me

two hours to rejoin the Nice road; of this, 1¾ hour was 'coasting' and a quarter of an hour only was pedalling.

At Nice I took, of course, the Route de la Grande Corniche, in spite of the two hours' walk it involves, and in spite, too, of the rather lonely character of the road. Perhaps it would be

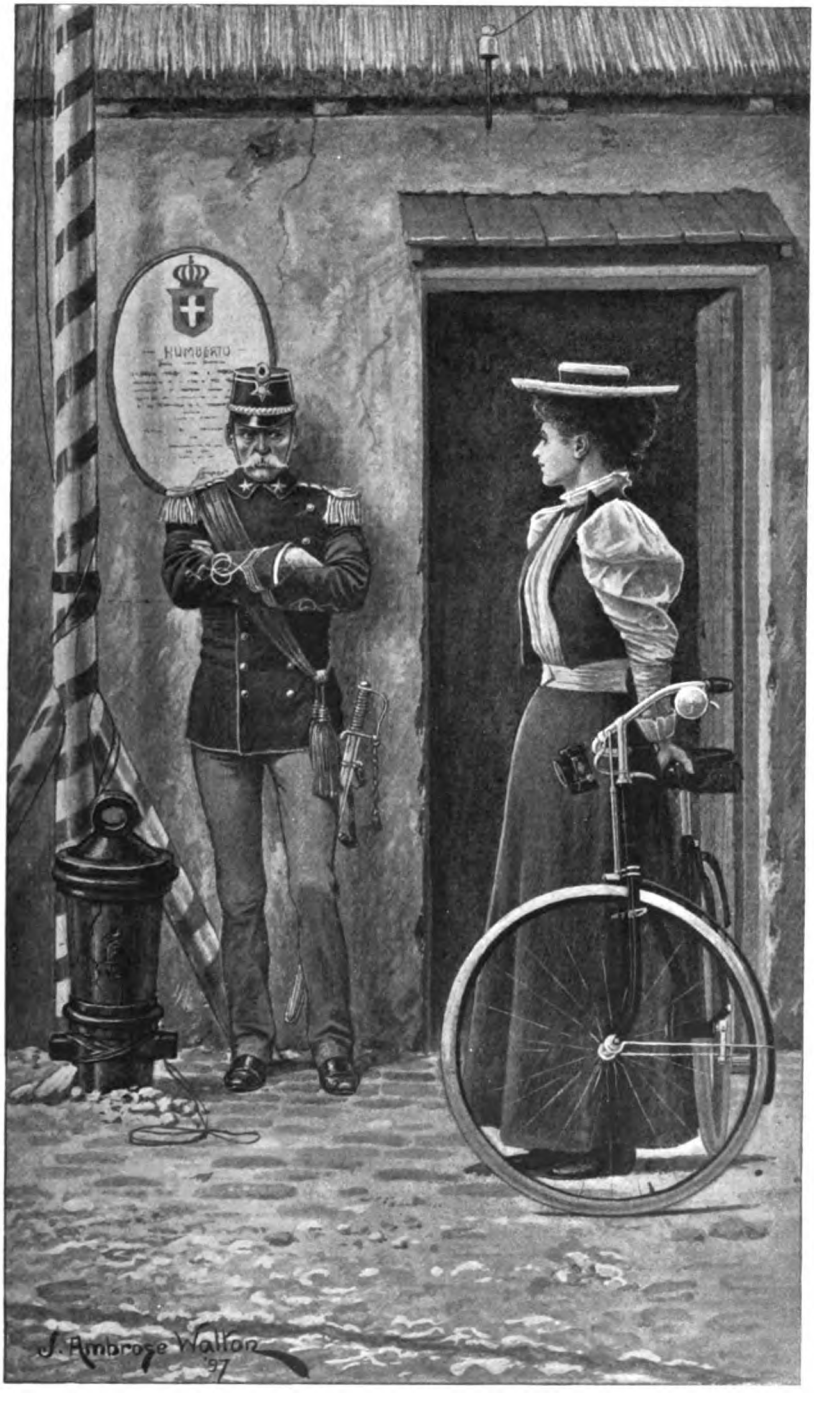
'COASTING'

more prudent for a lady alone *not* to take this road, but to return by the shorter, easier, and comparatively level Petite Corniche. I kept imagining I was at the top whenever I reached a flatter piece of road; but it was long before I passed Villefranche and Beaulieu, and then again I saw my favourite Eze perched up on its

hill-top below me. And so gradually I worked up to La Turbie, with the queer old Tour d'Auguste standing out against the sky. Then the descent proper begins, and is a very different affair from the run down from Grasse. It is perfectly safe to ride, and occasionally one can leave the pedals for a few minutes; but as a rule it is necessary to keep the machine well in hand, and sometimes to back-pedal hard. That evening there were several carriages on the road, La Turbie being a favourite afternoon drive from Mentone, and the twists and corners to be negotiated along the descent are frequent. Down below, Monaco and Monte Carlo can be seen, looking very peaceful in the evening light, and finally Cap Martin and Mentone. I was the last cyclist out on the promenade, and rode in just at dark, for once breaking my rule not to sleep at the place returning where I had stayed in going.

From Mentone eastward I had to retrace my previous route; but it is well worth while to do this, as the view both ways repays you. It is true that (for instance) when riding west the turns in the road constantly enable you to see the view east for a few moments, but it is not like having the east view under your eye mile after mile. It is of course unnecessary to chronicle the return journey further, but I will relate my experience when passing the Italian custom house on my re-entry into Italy.

I walked up the hill east of Mentone, bowing to the French Douane as I passed, and so on to the Italian Dogana. There I was asked to pay forty-five lire odd. I explained that the machine was not a foreign one entering Italy from abroad, but an Italian bicycle returning to its native land. The chief of the customs said no; it was a French machine, and must pay. I pointed to the Italian trade-mark and the word 'Torino' distinctly printed on the head-tube. That, he said, made no difference; every cycle leaving France counted as French. I must pay the forty-five lire, and it would be refunded to me when I took the bicycle back into France. This, of course, was a vain promise to me, as the machine was not mine and lived in Italy. Much argument ensued, as I was determined not to pay and he was determined that I should. I ought to have stopped and stated my case when I left Italy (as I said) a few days before, but no one remembered to have seen me pass, and I had no proof of the truth of my assertion. He could not permit me to go on. 'Mi rincresce, ma non si fa. Bisogna pagare,' and he folded his arms and leaned back against the wall. I, too, stood and



HE FOLDED HIS ARMS AND LEANED BACK AGAINST THE WALL

meditated, still maintaining a cheerful air, in contrast to his severity. At last a bright thought struck me. 'But the French customs officers below know that I came out of Italy on Saturday. Would their evidence be of any use?' 'Certainly,' with a supercilious smile; 'if *they* remember the signora, and will write me a little paper confirming her story, all difficulty will be at an end.' Nothing simpler. So, with a polite 'A rivederla,' I mounted the bicycle and soon ran down to my French friends. The situation was explained in a minute. The chief remembered me perfectly, and, to make assurance doubly sure, there was my 'simple formalité' standing smiling on guard, ready to bear witness to my good conduct in general and my veracity in particular. The paper was written, and I returned in triumph to the only Italian who, as yet, has treated me discourteously; but then I feel sure he thought I was a fraud, and it is said that Italy, being poor, is very keen after all her dues.

My enemy received the paper, read it out loud for the benefit of the staff, took off his hat, smiled, made me a low bow, and said, 'Buon giorno, Signora,' and so ended triumphantly my struggles with the custom house.

The C.T.C. ticket has just been made available for passing members through the Italian custom house without payment, but only after the observation of certain formalities; so in future the difficulties I encountered should no longer exist.

Concerning the safety of the road, I was told by residents that I should be as safe as in England all along the part of the Riviera that I traversed, and I never met with the slightest *contretemps*, or even with any cause for momentary anxiety. The only part of the road that was desolately lonely was the Upper Corniche between Villefranche and La Turbie, and there I met several parties of cyclists of both sexes, and in one instance two ladies alone. I met from time to time individual male cyclists and small parties of two or three, but very few ladies, except in the immediate neighbourhood of Nice and Mentone.

The road is in every instance perfectly easy to find, and even a traveller's knowledge of the languages is not necessary, except in cases of emergency. Hotel life can always be managed in English.

I did not carry Baedeker or Murray with me, but made careful notes beforehand about the places I should pass through, and especially as to where hotel accommodation was to be found. This is particularly necessary between San Remo and Genoa,

as there are plenty of important places on the map which do not possess hotels.

The small brown and blue maps, which can be carefully torn out of Baedeker without injury to map or binding, were what I used, and they answered admirably.

The expense may roughly be reckoned at about twenty per cent. less than it would be in England—that is, in Italy and France you pay about as many lire or francs as in England you would pay shillings. Italy is rather cheaper than France.

The Touring Club de France and the Unione Velocipedistica Italiana put up danger boards at all the steeper descents of the Corniche road, and, if they err at all in their selection of suitable spots, they err on the side of caution, and sometimes place a second board at a steep pitch or a nasty corner halfway down. One soon gets into the habit on rounding an ascending curve of looking out for the welcome red label 'Rallentare,' which marks the summit of the hill and a temporary cessation of labour.

I have not thought that to give my daily mileage and nightly stopping places would be of sufficient interest to the general reader, but merely mention that it is a great mistake to hurry along so beautiful a road. As a rule, I contented myself with about half the mileage of which I was physically capable, thus leaving plenty of time to loiter at pretty parts of the road, and to see the better-known places through which I passed.

The number of miles from place to place is clearly given in the letterpress of Baedeker, as also the train route in the maps. For the mileage by road, about ten or fifteen per cent. should be added, as the road winds round the headlands instead of tunnelling through them.

The distance in chilometri is generally marked along the Government roads by what we should call milestones. The reckoning is easy, for eight chilometri is exactly five miles, making one kilometre (French and Italian reckoning is the same) equal to half a mile and 220 yards. For rough reckoning of short distances it is near enough to count the mileage as half the number of kilometres, and then add a little to that. For accurate reckoning, of course, divide the number of kilometres by 8 and multiply the result by 5. I used to find five minutes for a kilometre a fairly accurate reckoning on a good road—that is, seven and a half miles an hour.

The part of the tour best worth doing was certainly the well-known region lying between Mentone and Nice. Next to that I should place the ride down from Grasse. The least interesting parts

were between Cannes and Nice, San Remo and Alassio, Bergeggi and Savona, Voltri and Genoa. Indeed, it is better not to ride the part between Genoa and Voltri, but to take the train, either to Pegli for the sake of the wonderful Pallavicini Garden, or to Voltri, two or three miles further west, where the train lines cease.

Fine weather is of course an essential, but in this I was fortunate, and indeed good luck attended me all the way. At first the hedges of aloe with their formidable spines, the prickly pear by the roadside, and the numerous thorny-looking twigs on the ground made me nervous of puncture, but no such misfortune befell me. To any who may feel inclined to take part or all of the tour I have described, I can only say that I wish they may have as pleasant a ten days as I had.

FROM ADEN FOR A FORTNIGHT

BY CAPTAIN W. DE S. CAYLEY

CARLYLE, as quoted by Burton in his 'First Footsteps in East Africa,' talking of Aden, says that the 'eye of Yemen is a mountain of misery, towering sheer up like a bleak Pisgah with outlooks only into desolation, sand, salt water, and despair.' This rather reminds one of the Persian couplet, so well known in the Punjab, which, describing another dusty spot, says that the four most striking things in Mooltan are the heat, the dust, the beggars, and the graveyards. The couplet is fairly true, and possibly Carlyle's saying might have been equally so in Burton's time; but, though the physical aspect of Aden must be the same as of yore, still it is now very easy to look out on more amusing scenes than those indicated above. Polo, racquets, and tennis flourish, and there is a truly exasperating golf course; so, taking it all round, you might be in many worse places than Aden; and there is no excuse for a man being inflicted—to quote Burton again—with 'Cachexy induced by an utter absence of change, diversity, and excitement.' Although the place is neither so bad nor so hot as it is popularly supposed to be, yet it does make a pretty serious effort about September to justify its evil reputation, as I had occasion to know, being quartered there during the year of grace 189-. A severe bout of heat during the first part of the month suggested the desirability of a short change, and the only direction open being southwards I determined to try my luck for a ten days' shoot among the Golis Hills in Somaliland. So much has appeared lately about this country, both in magazines and books, that I feel most diffident about putting pen to paper. Most of these accounts, however, have been written about comparatively long shikar trips and explorations, and Capt. H. G. Swayne's most interesting book is the result of the experience

gained by a very large number of expeditions into the interior. This short account is merely meant to show how it is possible for the scorched-up exiles in Aden to alleviate the monotony of their existence, and also get excellent sport in a comparatively short space of time.

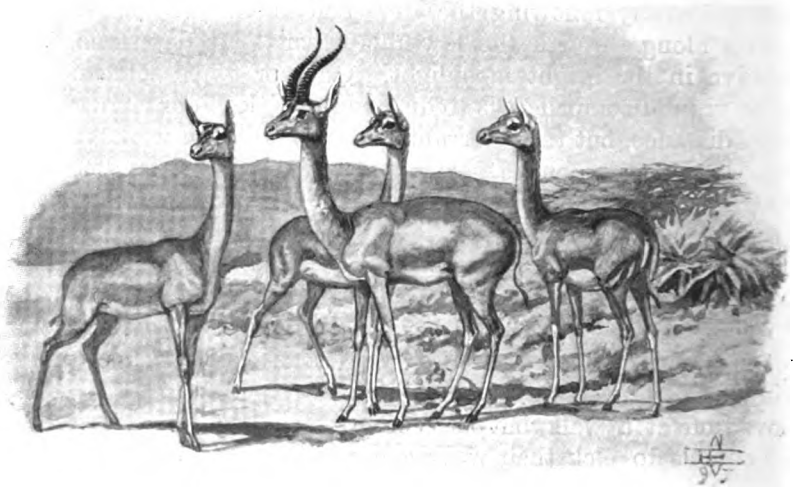
After arranging for the necessary leave I sent Hirsi Sherif, the Somali who I had engaged to act in the dual capacity of headman and cook, over to Berbera with my shikar kit. His orders were to hire camels, make all the necessary arrangements, and then march out to the place I had fixed on as my starting point and wait till I came. I myself followed a week later, and the voyage across, or rather round to Berbera, made a serious hole in the limited time at my disposal, taking as it did three days. Two rival companies run steamers to the opposite coast, but this does not accelerate the passage as might be expected; as a matter of fact the reverse is the case. They are only competitors for the merchandise exported from the towns along the coast, and the occasional passenger has often to possess his soul in patience for a whole day in some outlandish spot, while the skipper is trying to secure all the cattle, sheep, and articles of export for his own vessel. The maintenance of the British Empire necessitates our holding on to some inhospitable-looking places; but Perim must be very hard to beat in this respect, for a more desolate spot it is difficult to imagine. It is said to be healthy, and at all events they have an ice machine, so they are better off than in many places in the East. The only sports to be had are sea fishing and shark shooting. The latter form of amusement can be carried out from the shore, as the brutes swim about in shoals a very short distance out. You don't gather your game, but, when hit, have the unmitigated satisfaction of seeing him torn to pieces by his companions, for no self-respecting shark can resist blood even when it comes from his own family. Vessels save a short distance by keeping to the north of the Island and passing through the narrower part of the Straits of Bab-el-mandeb, only a mile and a half across. Any ship which fancies itself goes this way, and English and foreign men-of-war are signalled from the flagstaff, close in front of the residency, which looks right over the channel. The Political Resident, when I passed through, had a yarn of how a lascar of his once stopped an Italian man-of-war in the narrowest and most dangerous part of the strait by running up a signal to 'heave to at once,' instead of something else. The ship obeyed, and news was sent to the resident that a foreign man-of-war had anchored opposite his

drawing-room windows. He was down with fever at the time, but hurried forth with thoughts of a sudden attack on the island or some other startling *coup*. Of course the mistake was soon rectified, and the ship got out of her dangerous position without accident and proceeded on her way. It might, however, have ended differently, and no doubt had the vessel belonged to a less friendly Power the incident would have produced a chorus of shrieks of 'Perfide Albion!' There are a few gazelles in the island, introduced not many years ago, and these seem to be doing excellently. The habitation of the gazelle is certainly not as a rule amidst luxuriant vegetation; but nature must have given them most extraordinary power of adapting themselves to their surroundings, as what these can find to eat or drink in Perim besides lava and salt water is not apparent. If you have never had a thing you don't miss it, but it seems hard lines to be condemned to live in the tropics and not know the joy of attempting to appease an unquenchable thirst. Zaila, our next stopping place, has not much to recommend it at first sight, and a two-mile row in the blazing sun does not help to remove the unfavourable impression. Shooting, however, is to be had within a moderate distance, but the Political Resident does not have much opportunity of getting away, as in none of these coast ports is there more than one officer—a striking contrast with the neighbouring French port of Jibuti, which takes a whole regiment of officials to look after its wants. Conchologists would find Zaila a happy hunting ground, as there are strange and wonderful varieties of shells to be found, especially on the low, sandy islets flanking the harbour. A fourteen hours' run from Zaila and we are anchored in the open roadstead of Bulhar within half a mile of the shore. This (the smallest of the ports along the coast at which an Englishman resides) gets the full benefit of the 'Kharif' wind during the summer months, and the surf beating on the shelving beach makes landing quite an impossibility at times. Often has the resident to try to be calm as he sees his supply of soda-water and literature carried by in the steamers for two or three weeks in succession. Bulhar to Berbera only takes four hours; but, though the fleshpots of the latter were alluring, my anxiety to be in the jungles only permitted me to enjoy the hospitality of the Resident sufficiently long to have a glorious tub and then dinner. My ardent hope in this little expedition was that I should get a specimen of 'Strepisceros kudu,' there being very small prospect of another opportunity on account of the early return of my regiment to England.

I had been over in Somaliland before, but had not had a chance at one of these noble beasts, and to leave the country without its finest trophy would, I felt, be a source of never-ending regret in days to come. It being within a couple of days of full moon, we had the prospect of light nearly all night for our journey. 10 P.M. saw us—that is to say, Hassan, a trooper of the Coast Police and myself—on the backs of our camels and away. A good camel is a delightful conveyance, and our pair swung us along comfortably at about five miles an hour in a south-easterly direction over the gradually ascending bush-covered maritime plain. Duss Malableh (the gap in the face of the maritime range which is so conspicuous from the sea) being soon passed, the road, generally following the dry sandy bed of some 'Wady,' wound along through the low hills which loomed up weird and massive in the bright moonlight. Once or twice some broken bit of ground compelled us to dismount and lead our camels for a short distance, but the interruptions were few, and we kept it up steadily till the moon set, which was about an hour before dawn. Not being accustomed in Aden to all-night sittings, I had latterly dropped off to sleep pretty frequently, awaking with a start and a clutch at the peak of the saddle as the camel made some alteration in its pace; so I decided on a halt till the day began to break. No sooner had my head touched the sand than I was asleep; but I was only allowed a very short nap, as in about twenty minutes the inexorable Hassan insisted on a fresh start. We moved off at a walk, but as soon as there was light enough for our camels to pick their way we quickened our pace, and by the time the sun rose we were through the maritime range, and an open plain backed by the Golis Hills lay before us.

Pleasant as a good camel is to ride, much depends on the saddle, and in this case the stuffing of mine had gradually worked into a lump at the back and given the seat the profile of a ham. This was so very uncomfortable that I exchanged mounts with Hassan; but the change did not appear to suit him either, and after a short time in the place of honour forward, he took a back seat and steered his ship of the desert from the stern end of the saddle, which was less lumpy. We cut diagonally across the plain to the foot of the outlying hills, but saw no game except the ubiquitous 'dig dig,' the smallest of the antelope tribe, and a herd of giraffe-necked Waller's gazelle, or gerenook, consisting of the usual buck surrounded by his watchful and suspicious harem of five or six does. A stiff climb of a couple of thousand feet or so, up which we had to lead our camels, brought us out on to the

top and within measurable distance of our goal. In the old days the path up this hill was a severe trial to caravans going into the interior, and laden camels frequently failed to reach the top in a day's march. Now the Government have greatly improved the road and there is no longer any difficulty in the ascent. The Golis range in this part forms two steps, a short and a very long one. We had just climbed the long one, and between us and the next lay a stony plateau covered in parts with dark green bush. It was flanked to the east by the forest-clad mountain of Wagha and ended on the other side in a series of bluffs, the most westerly of which, 'Gan Libah,' or the lion's hand, was just visible in the



THE USUAL BUCK SURROUNDED BY HIS WATCHFUL HAREM

distance. In the middle of the plain I saw with much pleasure a bright white spot which could only be my Cabul tent. It took us some time to reach it though, as we had to work round several ravines before we got fairly into the straight; but, urged on by the prospect of breakfast, we increased the pace, and at 11.30 A.M. dismounted inside the thorn zareeba of our camp. After a scratch meal I had to start out again to provide Hirsi the cook with the wherewithal to make dinner, there being no meat in the larder. Fortunately I was soon able to send him a brace of hares, and later on, after a considerable amount of manœuvring, a Speke's gazelle was also bagged. There was a bit of luck in connexion with this last which is perhaps worth mentioning. My bullet broke one of his forelegs below the knee, and I never

for a moment expected to secure the animal, as the loss of the use of a leg seems to make very little difference to these beasts. He separated from the herd, however, and I followed him on the chance of another shot, marking him into some bush ahead. I was making my way towards the spot when he suddenly emerged into the open with great bounds, followed by a fox, who was very soon left behind. On reaching his track I found it spattered with blood to a far greater extent than could have been caused by a broken leg, and after following it for about a mile and a half I caught sight of the gazelle lying up under a bush, and a second bullet put it out of its pain. On examining the body I found that the blood was coming from his loins, out of which a piece the size of a man's hand had been eaten. He had probably lain down when first hit, and been set upon by the fox, who was a great big fellow. Others may have helped him, as I saw three or four about; but at all events I can take little credit to myself in the business.

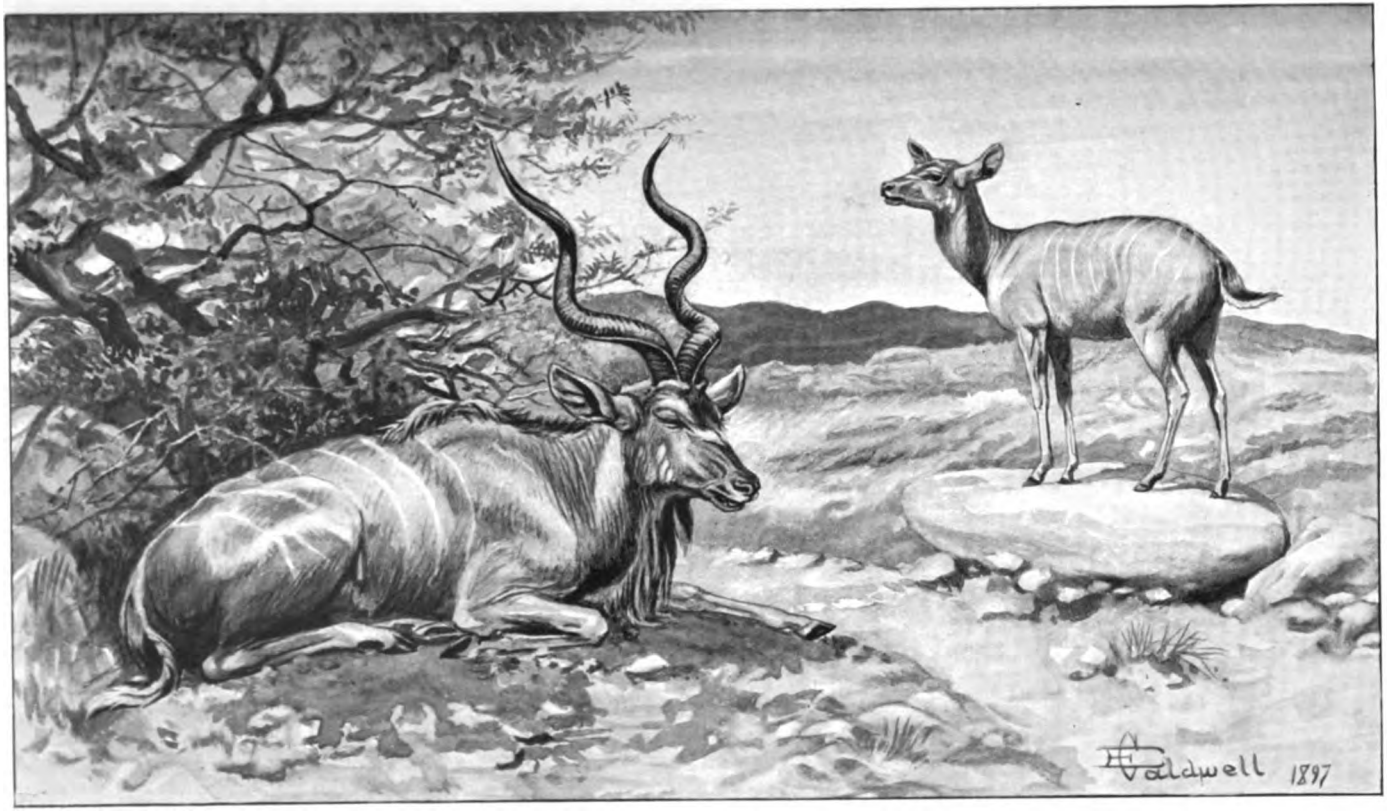
These foxes have a wonderfully keen scent for blood. Once, when I was in the country before, one of them got on to the trail of a gazelle which I had wounded, and was tracking with great difficulty over the stony ground. I had nothing to do except to follow the fox at a distance, while he puzzled out the line like a hound. This case, though, did not end so fortunately, as I never came up with the gazelle.

The north face of the wall of the plateau which forms the central part of Somaliland goes by the name of the Golis range. It is a favourite haunt of koodoo, but they are not so numerous as they were. During the day they usually select a shady spot midway down some spur, from which the watchful sentry can get a good view on every side; but during the night they usually seem to feed upwards, and are often seen in the early morning quite at the top of the hills, and this is of course the most hopeful time to get within shot. My first day was blank. I saw one buck in the early morning, but he saw us first and gave no chance of a shot, and we lost his track in the hard ground after carrying it for some distance. On the way back we suddenly came upon two comical-looking wart-hogs rooting about in an open space. It would have been easy to get a shot, but I had no wish for the trouble of cutting off and cleaning the head, besides carrying it home, having been through the experience before; so I let them go off, with their absurd tails stuck up in the air, rejoicing at their escape. The Somali is a bigoted Mussulman and will have nothing to do with the unclean beast; so if you

shoot one you have to do all the dirty work yourself, and, this being so, you are probably quite content with a single specimen. Even the knives used in skinning, &c., have to go through a regular course of purification before they are again considered fit for use. On our return, several koodoo with wonderful horns were said to have been seen quite close to camp, but, needless to say, they had made themselves scarce before our arrival. The next day we saw a buck early, and a chase he led us—straight down the hillside to the river-bed below, then up again in another place. At last we caught sight of him again across a ravine, but he had got our wind and was going off, and a long shot did not stop him. We stuck to his track, however, and came upon him again later, and I had a snap at him in the thick bush; but it was not his 'nuseeb' (fate) to die that day, as Jama put it, and he went off unhurt.

The supplies in my larder having run very low, I had to look out for game on the way home. Luckily I shot a gazelle, and also a dig dig and jungle fowl, so all hands were supplied with meat for dinner.

The next day I tried a change of tactics, and sent out men in different directions to look for koodoo while I stayed in camp and awaited their return. They brought back no 'khabar,' however, and a tramp round on my own account led to no better result. Having been over pretty well all the ground within reach, I thought I would try a change of camp; so when I set out at daybreak next morning, I left orders with Hirsi to move off a few miles to the east. After some hours spent in fruitless walking we found ourselves on the undulating ground between the plateau and the steep north slope of the hills. We were more for finding a shady spot for our midday rest than anything else, when a sudden exclamation of 'godur' (koodoo) from Guled (a local man who was with us) brought us up standing. Following the direction in which he pointed, we saw a buck and doe unsuspiciously feeding not more than half a mile away among the thorn bushes on the far side of a ravine. We watched them until the buck, whose horns looked in the bright sunshine almost like the bleached branches of a withered tree, lay down under a thorn bush, and the doe posted herself as sentry on a rock hard by. Now was the time to try conclusions, so Jama (the Shikari) and I worked our way round to some rocks about two hundred yards from where we had last seen the pair. A cautious peep over the top showed us that we were still undiscovered. There stood the doe, rigid as a statue, her great round ears stuck out ready to catch every sound, and a light-coloured patch in the deep shade showed

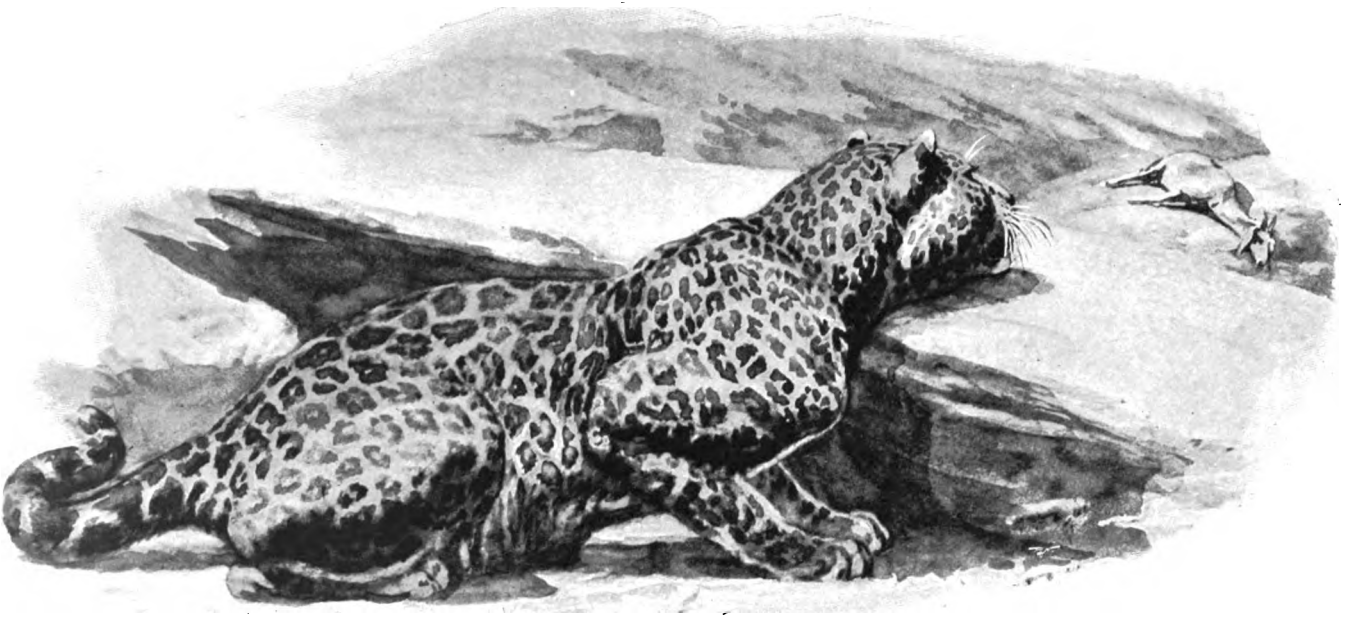


ENJOYING HIS SIESTA

where her lord and master was enjoying his siesta. To have attempted to get any nearer would have been folly, as there was no cover between us; so there was nothing to be done except to wait until he showed himself more clearly. It seemed ages before he moved, but at last he got up and made his way slowly on through the bush, finally taking his stand beneath a thorn tree. It seemed a good chance, but a closer inspection showed that the sloping trunk of the tree, which was only a small one, intervened, and that it moreover covered a considerable part of the shoulder. For a long time I refused to fire; but at last, over-persuaded by Jama, I took a steady aim at the centre of the shoulder, and, trusting to luck to miss the narrow trunk, pressed the trigger. When the smoke cleared away I saw my intended victim going strong and just disappearing over a hill in the distance; Jama also, whom I had sent forward as soon as they were out of sight, brought the unwelcome news that my bullet had struck the tree. Utterly disgusted with myself for being so foolish as to fire when I did, and never thinking to see the koodoo again, I sat down under a tree and had my lunch and a pipe, and then took up the track once more. The koodoo, not finding themselves pursued and not having seen us, had soon slackened their speed, and we had not followed them for more than a quarter of an hour when the lynx-eyed Guled again caught sight of them in the bush. They were wide awake this time, and another stalk only resulted in another miss as the buck made off. They were not likely to stop again now, and the only chance was to cut them off before they reached the safety of the steep slopes. A sharp double and I caught sight of a pair of horns above the bushes as our friend made his way along. He heard us, and for a second pulled up and showed his face, as he turned round to look, just giving me time to take a hurried aim at a spot below his chin, where I hoped his body might be. I fired, but the only answer was a crashing through the branches as the buck went off apparently unhurt. We found no blood where he had stood, and Jama almost in tears said that I had missed him again. However, we followed the track, and fifty yards further on were rewarded by the sight of a splash of blood on a stone; another fifty yards and a torrent had poured out, and just beyond we came upon my first koodoo lying in a heap on the ground stone dead, the blood trickling from a hole at the base of the neck. As I sat smoking the pipe of satisfaction and watching Jama and Co. make a hearty meal of broiled koodoo liver, we were startled by loud cries from some children who were looking after a mixed flock of sheep and goats close by, and soon one of them came running up saying that a

lion had just carried off one of their goats. Though I did not consider their tale at all probable, I thought it worth investigating, so hurried off in the direction indicated by the children, and followed the line in which the supposed lion had gone. We soon came upon a Somali standing sentry over the body of a goat, from punctures in whose throat the blood was still oozing. The goat had been dragged some yards up a hill composed of great rocks piled confusedly on one another, in the crevices of which any number of wild beasts could have found a secure retreat. The leopard, for such no doubt it was, had evidently intended taking his victim into his lair to devour at his leisure, but had been prevented by the approach of the Somali and had retreated into the recesses of the rocks. Jama and I dragged the goat out on to a projecting stone, and, sending the owner away, took up a position about sixty yards off, from which we had a good view of the carcase. We had to keep as still as mice, as there was no cover; but after a quarter of an hour's anxious waiting, which seemed an age, I became aware that there was something sticking up over a rock which I had not noticed before. Soon it moved slightly, and there was no doubt that it was the head of the leopard thinking out a plan of action. It suddenly disappeared, and I seized the opportunity of covering the goat with my rifle. So long a time passed without his showing that I began to fear that we had been seen; but after a period of suspense he re-appeared and crept along, his belly almost touching the ground, till he got near the goat, then with a spring he was on it and had commenced dragging it away. I pressed the trigger and had the satisfaction of seeing him roll over dead, the bullet passing through his back and coming out at his shoulder. He was a full-grown male and his skin was in perfect condition. The Somalis who soon collected round showed the greatest satisfaction at his end, as they said he was responsible for the death of numerous sheep and goats and more than one man, which may or may not have been true.

It was a long trudge to camp, and we were all heavily laden, as we could get no help from the natives who were about in carrying the koodoo meat, &c. They probably hoped that we would leave it all for them. The koodoo ought not to have been fit for any Mussulman to eat, as he was stone dead when we reached him. Jama, however, made out that blood flowed as he passed a knife across his throat, and, as there was no witness excepting myself, the fraud did not matter, and all hands were able to enjoy a meat dinner. Had anyone besides myself been present the whole of the meat would have been absolutely wasted,



THINKING OUT A PLAN OF ACTION

so bigoted are these Somalis, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say so frightened are they of being accused of laxity in their religious observances.

The next two days were again blank. One koodoo, indeed, fell to my rifle, and I looked upon his head as mine; but, as I was making my way across the ravine to where he lay apparently dead, he recovered himself and went off. There was any amount of blood, and I felt certain that I would get him in the end; but, though I followed him till the evening, I never got a chance of another shot, and had reluctantly to abandon the chase; nor did the men whom I sent out next day find any trace of him. My cook tried hard to dissuade me from having koodoo's tongue for dinner that night, on the ground that as the koodoo is in the habit of feeding on 'waba' (the shrub from which the natives get the poison for their arrows), his tongue would be most certainly poisonous, and I think he gave me up as lost when I refused to listen to his remonstrances.

The hills were enveloped in mist on the morning of October 7, so it was 6.45 A.M. before I got away from camp. Almost as soon as we started we sighted koodoo feeding on the plateau, and in working towards them came right up to a small buck, which was of course allowed to go. He gave the alarm to the rest, however, and the whole lot made off. As they went away I missed a fine buck disgracefully with both barrels, but I atoned for it immediately afterwards by breaking the shoulder of another which suddenly appeared round a corner a good deal further off.

He went off down the hill with a foreleg swinging, but nevertheless gave me a considerable amount of trouble before I finally secured him. Forcing my way through the thorny bushes and cactus on the hillside, I time after time had the mortification of hearing him crashing down the hill just in front of me. At last, by sending Jama off to one side to distract attention from myself, I managed to steal right up to him, and finish him with a bullet through his lungs.

Having now got two nice heads I was quite satisfied, and so next day went off on a camel with Hassan to explore the Wagha mountain to the eastward. We left our camel at the foot, and walked up to the top—a longish climb; but the magnificent view and glorious air amply repaid us when we got there. What new life a few days of a climate like this would put into some of the parched-up souls in Aden, or on the coast! Perhaps some day a sanatorium may come into existence in this charming spot, and give many a sickly soldier and hardworked official a chance of pulling themselves together.

Below, to the north, the Maritime Plain, with its border of gleaming surf, lay before us, and in the middle of the coast line the town of Berbera was just distinguishable as a shining patch. To the east we looked over the inhospitable Dolbahanta country, broken up by numerous low ranges, and to the west was the country which I had been scouring for the last few days. The luxuriant vegetation all round contrasted strongly with that usually seen in stony, thorny Somaliland. Really fine trees were plentiful, and the ground was clothed with ferns and creeping plants, while here and there an open space of bright green turf enchanted the eye accustomed to the barren rocks and glaring sands of Aden. The size of the trees especially struck my guide, who had never before seen anything larger than an acacia; but nothing appealed to me more than the cedars, which became common as we neared the top. They were not like the mighty deodar of the Himalaya certainly, but they still had sufficient of the cedar to make them very pleasant and cool to look at.

On the way down we came on a colony of rock rabbits, called by the Somalis 'Boma.' They are quaint little beasts, not unlike marmots, which sit up and chatter at you, and then scuttle away under the rocks as soon as you make any movement; but they are of a different species, their toes being clawless and not adapted to digging.

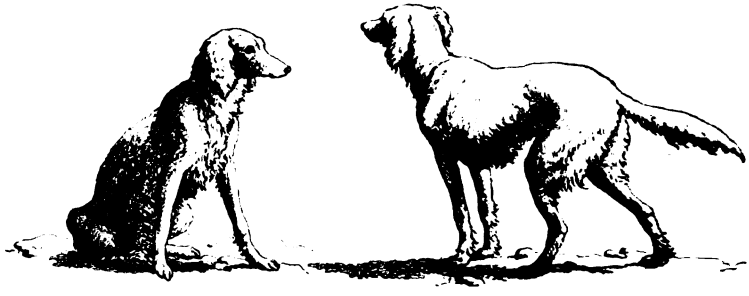
Their feet are very curious, being quite soft and hairless, and with only three toes before and four behind. The few remaining days of my leave I employed in making my way to the coast by easy stages, doing a little small game shooting as I went along. I also shot a 'lesser koodoo' and an 'oryx,' and did not get a lion which was in the neighbourhood. It was a very hot and thirsty day, and we were making for some low hills to look for water when we were attracted by a lot of vultures circling in the air. Soon afterwards we came across the footprints of a large lion, with something heavy trailing on the ground behind him. His tracks led us up to the place where we had seen the birds, and there we found in a deep and narrow nulla the half-eaten body of a wild ass, and not far off a cave where the lion had slept the night of his meal. We followed him for some distance, but the ground was very rocky, and we had eventually to give it up. The lion, no doubt, came back again that night, but I had to let him finish his meal in peace, as I could not run the risk of missing the steamer to Aden, which has no fixed day for leaving Berbera. I saw a number of wild asses that day—beautiful beasts, about 14.2, in perfect condition, with coats that would have done credit

to any stable; but I contented myself with getting as near them as I could, and then admiring them through my glasses.

When I got to Berbera I found I had a day to wait for the steamer; but there was of course no time to go back and look for the lion. The morning I left for Aden I went out at daybreak and shot a 'lowland gazelle' (of which I had no specimen), and brought to a close a most enjoyable and fairly successful little trip. Long may Somaliland be available for similar excursions;

A Lesser Koodoo

but, to ensure it, sportsmen who visit the country must assist the Resident at Aden in his efforts to save the game from extermination, and to keep the country for ever as a happy and accessible hunting-ground. If the rules as to amount of game to be shot, and localities to be let alone, are observed, there is no danger of the game disappearing; but unfortunately all visitors to the country are not equally conscientious. Koodoo are, I believe, not yet legislated for, but steps for their protection will soon be necessary, or there will not be many of them left.



GOLF IN PORTUGAL

BY ETHEL M. SKEFFINGTON

FOR the last few years the 'royal and ancient game' has been rapidly gaining fresh converts in all directions. Few persons would expect to find it taking root in Portugal, but now the majority of the British population at Oporto play, and are sufficiently bitten with the fever to spend many of their off days on the links at Espinho.

This curious little fishing town, situated some ten miles south of Oporto, has of late years been greatly devastated by the repeated and each time more violent incursions of the Atlantic, and several of the largest houses, together with hundreds of the fishermen's squalid little huts, have been washed away. The railway metals have already been diverted inland twice, and are again threatened, so that in all probability it will be necessary before long to re-lay the lines from the last station on to hills bordering the sandy plains on which the town is built. The damage done is very considerable, and has caused the utmost poverty and distress, to relieve which Dona Maria Pia, the Dowager Queen of Portugal, has at her own expense erected a long line of neat little cottages; but these are quite inadequate to accommodate the whole of the victims to the ravages of the sea, and the most quaint little shanties, patched together with rusty tin plates—in fact, anything that will help to keep out the weather—are springing up like mushrooms on all sides.

The inhabitants are nearly all descended from the Phœnicians, the chief characteristics of that race being easily traceable in their physiognomy. They keep themselves separate from the Portuguese peasants, seldom, if ever, intermarrying, and having as little to do

with the surrounding villagers as possible. The fishing boats are still built after the original Phœnician model, very curious in shape and exceedingly picturesque, with high-pointed prows to crest the waves; they are painted in the gayest of colours, and their name (usually after that of some well-known saint) is rudely scrawled along their side in large red or white letters. They have a rough, dangerous time of it putting off, and still worse coming in through the heavy surf; for there is nothing between us and America to break the long roll of the Atlantic. They approach the beach stern first, and are immediately yoked

A Group of Portuguese Caddies

to large teams of oxen, which drag them out of the break of the wave, over rollers, and leave them in position for launching the following day; but, being long and heavy, they are apt to swerve suddenly on the crest of a sea, and, if turned broadside on, not only are they swamped, but have frequently been completely smashed; and these accidents are usually attended with considerable loss of life, as, of the numerous crew hurled into the surging water amongst a *débris* of broken planks and ropes, too often many are unable to struggle to shore.

At about fourteen years of age the boys are drafted off to the sardine fisheries in the boats their fathers belong to, and until

then are employed on the links as caddies; and excellent little caddies they make, too, being quick and intelligent, always good-humoured, and possessed of such keen eyesight that a lost ball is almost unheard of, except in the winter season when the burn is in flood.

It is funny what very grand names most of these small urchins boast of--Justino, Herculano, Marcellino, Fermino, Cæsar, Dionysio, &c. &c.—scarcely one but the namesake of a Roman emperor. They are great gamblers; the round finished, they rush off, produce a filthily dirty pack of cards, and begin eagerly playing for cigarettes and other stakes.

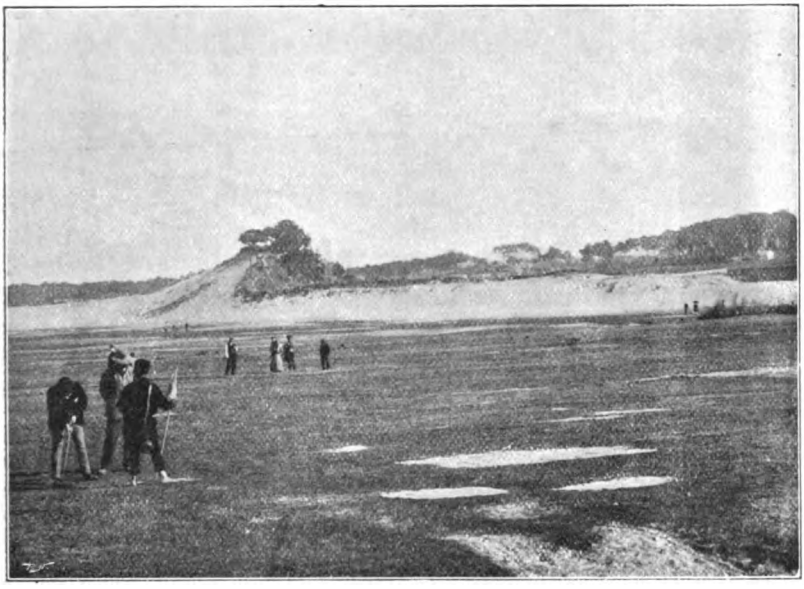
Honesty is not one of their virtues—in fact, they are confirmed little pilferers—but at the same time they have a most curious and strict code of honour; for while anything entrusted to their care is held sacred, the same thing left about would most certainly be appropriated. As an instance, some coats were left on the green, and the players were proceeding with their game, intending to entrust the boy who had gone on with the flags to take them back to the house, when one of the caddies carrying remarked that they would not be safe unless in charge of one of the boys receiving payment that day, for he himself would certainly levy toll on the contents of the pockets if unemployed, and so would any of his companions. This confession was so openly and naïvely made as to be very amusing.

Two or three of the elder boys have been given old clubs, and already play quite a respectable game; and some of the smaller ones have ingeniously fashioned the most curious instruments, with which they manage to play matches among themselves, always for stakes—ten reis (a halfpenny) a hole, and twenty reis on the round.

They pride themselves on knowing the name of every club in English, and take a keen interest in the game. Not long ago, one was overheard telling another he had learnt to count the strokes in English, as he had listened very carefully to the 'senhor' for whom he was carrying. He then proceeded to teach the others—'one, two, three, four, five, six, d—— n, eight, d——n'—and said he could not understand why we should have the same word to mean seven and nine, only that when it means the latter it is always said with far greater emphasis.

Golf has been played here for more than eight years, the initiative being due to half a dozen enthusiasts, who, without promoting a formally constituted club, rented a house on the links which any golfer is welcome to make use of.

The game was started here before it became so generally popular at home, and at first very few followers joined the ranks; but with the great boom that spread so universally and rapidly over England, people going backwards and forwards became more and more keen, and were soon drawn deep into the vortex; now the game has caught on to such an extent that at the last meeting there were no fewer than thirty-three entries for the medal, while over seventy persons (including ladies) sat down to luncheon, three very pleasant days being brought to a close by a



THE FOURTH HOLE

lively little dance at the Assembly Rooms, which (then closed for the winter season) were specially opened for the occasion.

The course is a nine-hole one, and delightfully sporting; it cannot perhaps boast of St. Andrews or Gullane greens, still the natural bunkers are all first-rate hazards, and you can enjoy a round here as thoroughly as on any nine holes at home.

From the first tee the burn is approached at about the same distance as the 'Burn' at St. Andrews, and from the second it is recrossed at a distance to catch a poor drive; the next is an iron shot over a hundred yards of loose sand, and the fourth is a long hole over the railway embankment; the fifth a full drive from a tee on the brink of the burn; the sixth a simple hole

without any hazard; at the seventh the burn traps a foozled drive, and the sand bunker beyond anything but a long one; the eighth hole is an easy one; but at the last, in addition to the railway, there is a swamp, which deters anything but a long driver from attempting a direct approach to the home hole. The record is 39 and 81 for eighteen holes. The annual meeting (medal and match play) is held on February 2, a great day, when eager golfers' families crowd the links, and come up to you, just as you are addressing the ball, with a most bewitching smile, and 'Do so hope you are going to win,' &c.; but the presence of ladies, welcome at almost any other sport in the world, is looked upon as *de trop* on the sacred ground here as much as anywhere else. Perhaps it is just as well their good sense does not allow them to approach the teeing ground at the burn hole, for nothing but a long clean drive will land you on the green, and anything approaching pulling or slicing takes you into hopeless difficulties; for this burn twines about like the stealthy arms of a hungry octopus, ready to engulf the nervous golfer.

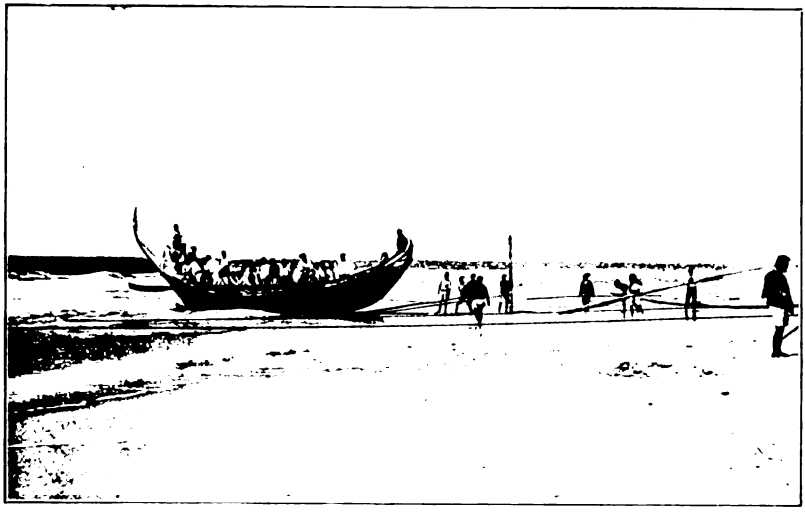
One serious obstacle to contend with during the months of July and August—the great bull-fighting season—is that the *touros* used in the arena are turned out to grass a week previous to being driven into Oporto during the night of Saturday, preparatory for the spectacle the following day; and as the Spanish custom of killing the bulls is not adhered to in Portugal, Monday again sees their dark defiant forms on the links. To many a bull has been imputed the failure to lower the record of 39, and, in truth, his near proximity is not conducive to the steady nerve required for a good round. They tear up the flags, sometimes the greens, to say nothing of petrifying quite a courageous golfer with fear.

Of course, they are herded with tame cattle, but the only way in which golf can be made possible is by bribing the *campinos* in charge of the animals to drive them beyond the boundary; even then they are sometimes uncomfortably near, and when one is putting at the sea hole, they are apt to look up quickly, and to appear to take such a lively interest in the game that the golfer is thankful to walk quickly to the next teeing ground, where the odds are 10 to 1 on a 'foozle,' or he slices horribly to the right, so near his enemies that he is glad to abandon the ball and rejoice that the embankment is near at hand.

Oporto being the home of port wine, it is used as a substitute for whisky on the links, and a *rapaz da garrafa* (bottle caddie) is usually stationed with a good supply of port and a tumbler

hidden in the railway embankment, amongst the bushes and mesembryanthemum, or, as the golfer more properly terms the plant, 'misery-anthemum,' on account of the horribly tenacious manner it has of clinging to his ball.

At the end of the links is a large factory where sardines are prepared and tinned for export. The boats put off at sunrise, and nets are laid some three miles out. The net is about 500 yards in length, with a sack of finer mesh at either end, into which the sardines are driven, and to which a line is attached; the lines are then hauled in by teams of fifteen to eighteen yoke of oxen—that is to say, between sixty and seventy-two bullocks to every net. One good haul has been known to fetch



A SARDINE BOAT COMING IN

as much as 500*l.*, but bringing in sardines to the value of 100*l.* is considered a really good day's fishing.

Quite two-thirds of the take is bought by the factory, where hundreds of hands are daily employed cleaning, trimming, cooking, and finally tinning the fish in oil, which, by the way, comes from Italy; it is curious, considering how much is produced in the country, and the various processes employed, that manufacturers are unable to render it tasteless. The greater part of the remaining fish is packed on the shore in square baskets, being previously cleaned, the heads cut off, thoroughly rubbed with salt, and sent up country; while the comparatively small quantity left over is carried round by the women and sold retail.

The arrival of the net is a grand sight on the occasion of a successful catch. A great noise goes up of shouting, whistling, and cheering, as the sacks slowly appear, heaving and swelling as they are dragged through the shallow water, until they reach the shore, when the men, half naked, cut open the mesh and begin shovelling the sardines, which are heaped on the sand, so many buckets full making up each lot, and the fish is then sold by auction, an old basket being hoisted on a pole to announce that the sale is taking place.

During the landing of the fish a little army of caddies collects, to avail themselves of the general confusion and fill their *carapucas* with as many as they can plunder, and these long fishermen's caps

THE CLUB HOUSE, ESPINHO

hold quite a considerable quantity. A man is told off to protect the fish, he carries a heavy stick which he uses freely, so the boys' method of procedure is as follows: they form partnerships of three, and make a simultaneous charge upon the heaps; one is pretty sure to be caught and to suffer for the good of the firm, but all take their chance of this, and while the unlucky one receives castigation, the other two make the most of their opportunity and time, and later on the spoil is fairly divided among the partners.

The whole scene is a quaint one, which any artist might revel in. The brilliantly rich blue and silver sheen on the masses of jumping fish, dancing and sparkling in the southern sunshine, lying in heaps on the almost white glaring stretch of

heavy sand, and the deep ultramarine of the Atlantic behind the curious high prows of the boats drawn up in file along the shore, all heighten the picturesqueness of the spectacle. Also beautiful pieces of colour are added by graceful groups of native women, who cluster round to sort the fish.

Apart from fishing and golf, Espinho has another aspect during the months of August and September, when it assumes the garb of a fashionable watering-place, for although gambling is strictly prohibited by Portuguese law, it is winked at here; there are no fewer than four establishments where *roulette* is played, all more or less luxuriously if rather gaudily decorated, and these attract a crowd of visitors from the middle and north of Spain.

With all the varied amusements of the place, however, the principal attraction and charm for a golfer will remain the sporting little course over the Espinho Links.

EIGHT WEEKS ON THE WEST COAST OF IRELAND

BY A. B. WHITTINGTON

FEW English sportsmen, who eagerly endeavour to obtain good shooting but who are quite unable to rent a large estate, have any idea of what Ireland could afford them, or at what a comparatively trifling outlay. If you can get a party together of three or four friends the expense is extremely small. I speak from experience. For several years I took a shoot in the West Coast of Ireland. I paid two pounds ten a week for 10,000 acres of shooting, five lakes full of trout, many acres of rabbit warren, and a large furnished house. Add to this opportunities unsurpassed for studying a people as far removed from *fin de siècle* civilisation as can well be imagined.

In the proclaimed districts many owners of estates in Ireland have ceased to preserve. What with crime and boycotting, the general opinion in England is that the place is unsafe, and English people do not care to run the risk. If Mayo may be taken as a fair specimen, a more harmless populace it would be difficult to find or to imagine.

On the morrow of our arrival at Westport, after a rough and it must be admitted very uncomfortable journey, a wild scene met our view. The house stood upon a rock, and a good sea-

Henry Stannard.

spray would damp our dining-room window, for we faced, to the east, an open sea from the extreme outer arm enclosing the bay. Bearing to the right, beyond this, were Clare Island, Achil Beg, and Bill Rock. This latter islet, twelve miles off, is, in the breeding season, studded with gulls' and guillemots' eggs so closely that you can barely find space for a foot's breadth or length without treading on them. The guillemots let the sun do the work of hatching by day, and only sit at night, yet as no two guillemots' eggs are exactly the same colour, the parent always returns to and recognises her own.

Away inland to the east stretches the blue of Clew Bay, with its two hundred islands, around the town of Westport. Outside the bay, and west of us, lies the sound, with an oyster-bed ; and, beyond that again, Achil ' Island,' now a peninsula. Behind us, to the north, rises the rocky gorse-clad side of a mountain for perhaps 1,500 feet. Here the wild mountain goat gains a perilous but sure footing, while over the summit, and out to sea, soars the golden eagle.

But as I had no intention of living on scenery, I determined to lay in a little live stock, and at once made arrangements for procuring a few sheep. I said the peasants might bring me what they had for my inspection, and if the result was satisfactory I would buy. Next morning as many as twenty-five would-be vendors appeared, each leading a sheep. I had them all out in front for review, and passed my hand over them. I then selected —with some anxiety, being no connoisseur—four fat sheep at 7*s*. 6*d*. each, and had them tethered on the grass. Next morning I received a terrible shock. They were all as flat as newspapers ; I could almost see through them. The rascals had blown them out with gallons of water !

Provisions were wonderfully cheap. Fowls were four a shilling ; eggs, twenty for sixpence. Fish and lobsters were to be had at any price you liked to pay. You could get a dozen lobsters for a shilling. The people had no market, Westport, the nearest town, being thirty miles off, and a journey thereto involving a long tramp and sleeping on the road.

The shooting was all that the heart of sportsman could wish. An ordinary bag would consist of, perhaps, two brace of grouse, a hare, a widgeon, a teal, a merganser, a smew, and frequently specimens of rare shore-birds. In fact, the beauty of the whole shooting was that you never knew what was going to get up. There were a very fair sprinkling of grouse, numerous wild-fowl of every description, golden plover, snipe, and about October 15

came great numbers of woodcock. A few hares were to be had. These latter one often found as they lay in the seaweed on the seashore.

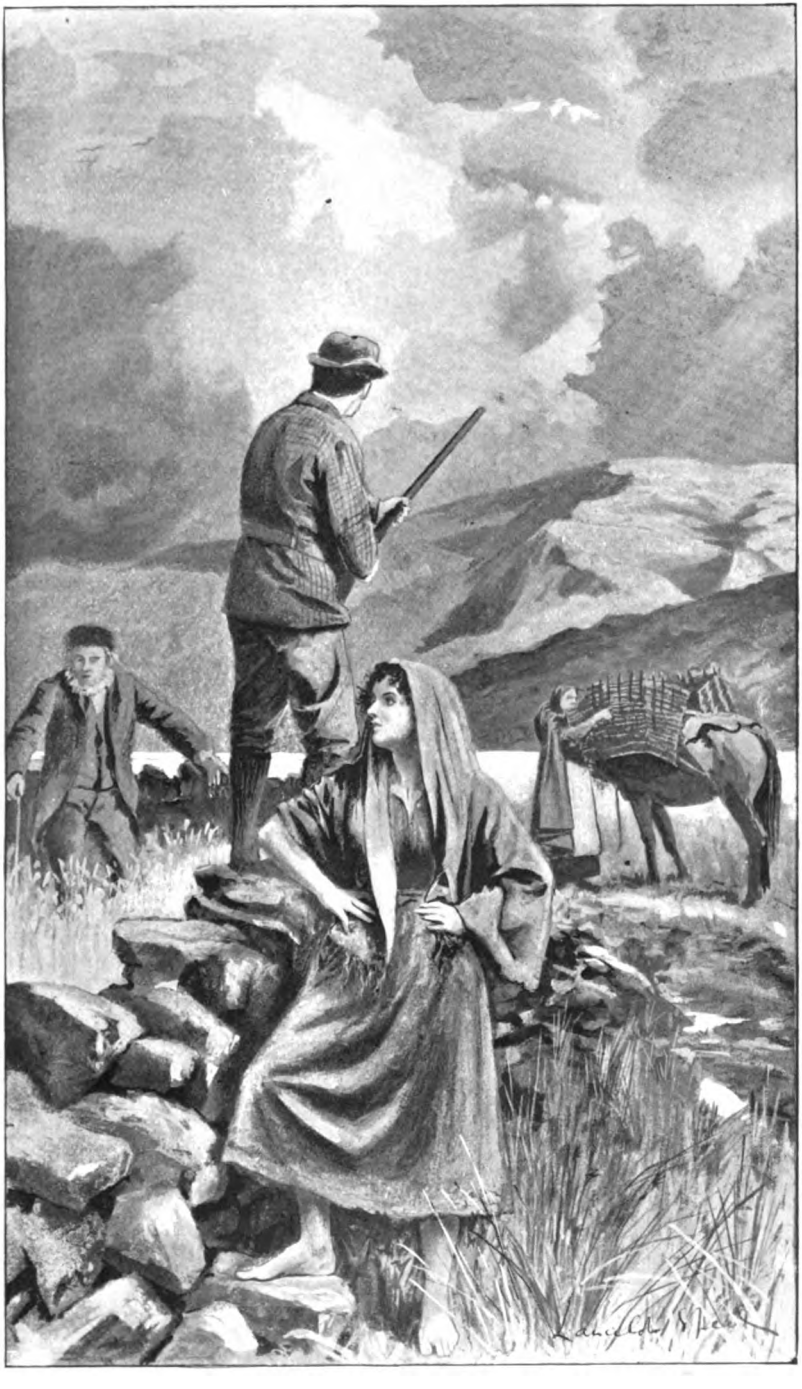
Most of the natives possess a rood of corn surrounded by a rough stone wall. These little enclosures extend down to the seashore, and are a great attraction to the hares, which come down, morning and evening, to eat the seaweed, and for pillage of these crops. I was just sitting down to dinner one evening when my servant said someone wanted to see me. I went out. Said my visitor, half crying:

'Would yer honour mind coming and destroying a blackguard of a hare that's in my crops?'

Tired, and loth to leave my dinner, I would have declined, but for his distress and piteous tone. As it was, I took my gun, and followed him to the spot, a distance of a few hundred yards. On the way I learned that this hare had been paying nightly visits to the poor fellow's only crop, till she had consumed the best part of it. In fact, if the man was to be believed, the same hare had eaten him out of house and home for the last twenty years. But now was the day of reckoning! I stood on the wall, and bade the man drive her out. Puss jumped on the opposite wall, so I had no difficulty in killing her. A very old lady she was, with a blue back, and weighed just ten pounds. The man could not have been more grateful than he was for this deliverance. As for Puss, she hung ten days in the larder before we attacked her further, which we did on the last day of our sojourn. Anything less appetising than this blue hare it would be difficult to imagine—no flavour at all of our English hare; and we did not readily forget her.

There would be plenty of grouse but for the hosts of vermin with which the place swarms. It is overrun with foxes, weasels, and stoats, to say nothing of thousands of ravens. On one occasion the keeper from an adjoining property asked leave to destroy the foxes on the mountains. He killed seventeen in one cave on the summit. One frequently comes across a sheep that has lost its footing and been killed in falling. By the next day nothing but its whitened bones are to be seen, so many have been the candidates for the remains. The chough also, another carrion eater, is very plentiful.

We had great fun shooting the rock-doves. One had but to throw a stone on to the rocks or cliffs where they live, and they would come out in hundreds, affording excellent practice for pigeon-shooting. The flavour, too, is very fine if they are cooked



I STOOD ON THE WALL, AND BADE THE MAN DRIVE HER OUT

in the following way: Cut off the head, and truss the bird for roasting, having stuffed him with the soft roes of two bloaters. Roast, and serve on toast, with a little clear gravy; spread the roe on the toast in serving. The object in cutting off the head is to deceive, and I leave the reader to discover for himself what I intend this dish to represent. I may add that the bird should be hung for six days.

The lakes, which are situated near the top of the mountain, are literally full of trout. In fact, you can pull them out as fast as you can cast your line. Not being a fisherman, I had with me only a pike-rod, but as I was told they might be caught with a stick, I asked my man whether that would be any use. He said: 'Well, you see, yer honour, they're jest jostling one another.' This sounded promising, and I thought I might try my luck, with the result that I caught a hundred trout of from three to seven ounces as fast as I could cast the line.

The fishing in Clew Bay is wonderful. While I was there ten or a dozen steam-trawlers came from Milford Haven—about forty-eight hours' steam—and would take about 2,000*l.* worth of fine fish back with them, eschewing all but the best, such as turbot, soles, lobsters. The herrings are the finest I have ever seen or heard of; I once weighed nine, and they were six pounds.

Not a single Irishman would venture on the sea when there was the ghost of a white crest on the waves. At such times they would rather lose their nets than try to recover them. The following is eminently characteristic of them:—We had arranged to cross the bay for the purpose of drawing a seine-net—five of ourselves, my Irish servant, and two of the men in one boat, and six men and the net in the other. We started early, and sailed twenty-three miles to the spot where we expected to find the salmon. We had a not very successful draw, as the men, failing to raise the corks, the trout and salmon jumped the net. We then sent off the men to get something to eat in the village, telling them to be back on the quay, where the boats had been put up, at five o'clock. But when the time came rain was falling and there was a slight mist, and not a single man would get into the boats, though we stormed and called them cowards. However, I was able to make an impression on my servant, who was also the caretaker. As the other men remained impervious to all threats, we determined to sail the twenty-three miles without their help. But what chiefly exercised their minds was the question which they presently promulgated: How were they to be paid for the boat if it and we were lost! They returned in

the other boat the following day, and claimed an extra day's wage, which I successfully contested. But for this offence I suffered the penalties of 'boycott' till I left.

Poverty I never saw. Eight and nine pounds a year is the highest rent paid, and a poor crop of potatoes furnishes a sufficient excuse for withholding payment. All the able-bodied men who are of an age to do so go over to England for the harvesting, and earn high wages, which very nearly keep them till harvest comes round again. So universal is the practice that during the season I was there only old fellows, women, and boys were to be seen about.

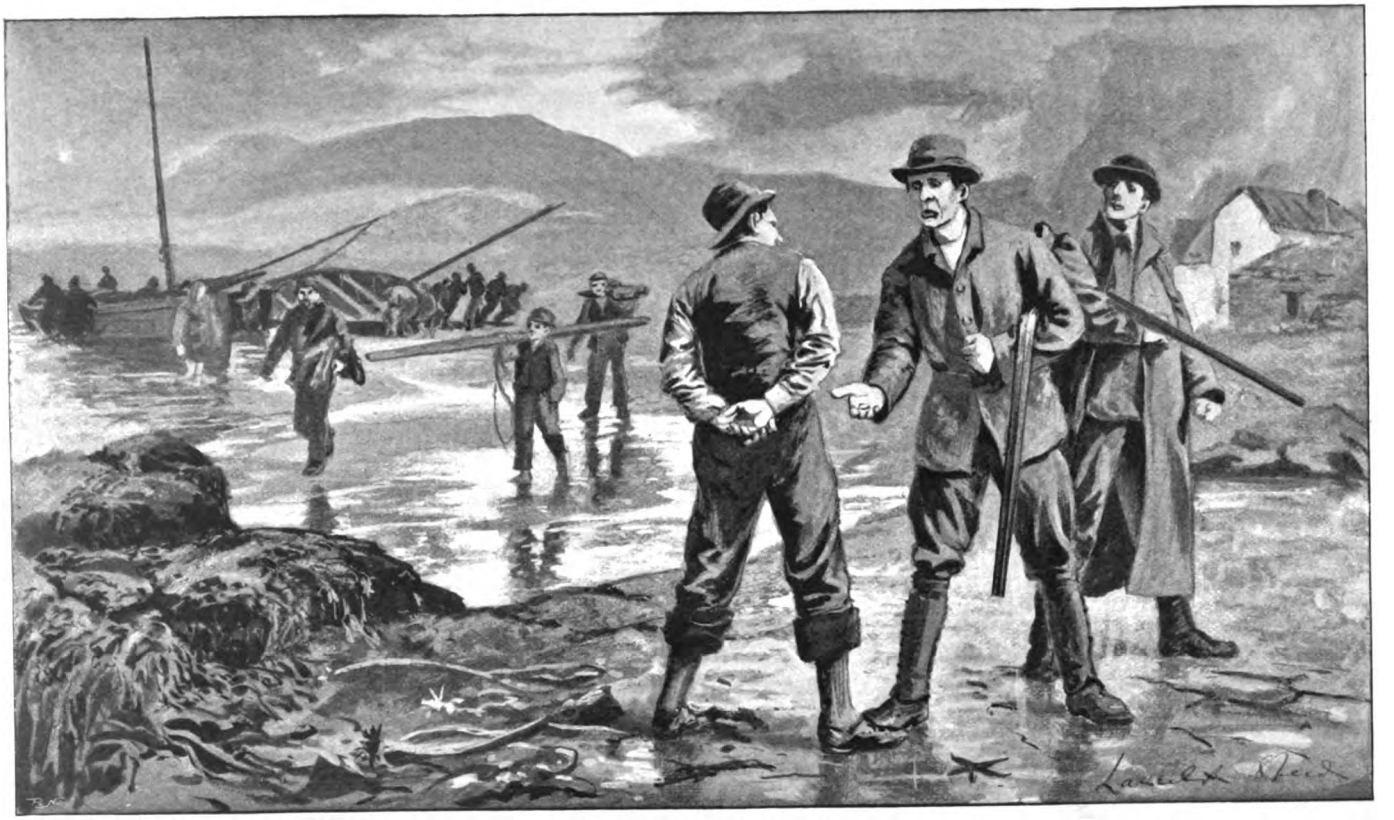
Periwinkles are an immense source of wealth. A man made 600*l.* in one year by ballasting with these the 'Hookers' on their return to Westport after supplying the islands off Achil with corn, flour, and other provisions. Formerly stones were used for this purpose. Labour is sufficiently cheap. Five shillings a week was all we paid the boy who fetched the bread and carried our letters, nine Irish miles, either way, and who often carried in addition from thirty to forty pounds weight of cartridges.

But the men do little but fish. The women do all the field work. They also weave their own cloth, which they dye a deep red. The men wear the same, but undyed.

Both men and women drink potheen, but, as a rule, are not drunkards. They prefer tea to anything else, saving up their money to buy some wretched stuff at three shillings a pound, when the traveller comes round, four times a year.

I have said that the people are terrible cowards. Theirs is the picturesque cowardice of superstition. No man will leave home after dark, for fear of the fairies. The following is a case in point. I told my man to have nails put in my boots, as often had to be done, on account of the rough walking on the stony mountains. Next day I had to complain that this had not been attended to. He said: 'Mr. W——, Sir, yer Honour, I beg yer pardon—was it not afther dark you sent me?' 'Well?' I said. 'Shure, yer Honour, don't yer know the fairies are about!'

Should they go to a wake, the difficulty is to get home, in view of these dangers. Ten or twelve persons, having made an end of the watching and smoking (it is a popular fallacy to suppose that drinking goes on at these wakes), will disperse themselves somewhat after this fashion: four or five will go home with one man; two or three more go off together, and so on till the last man, having no one to take him, is forced to remain for very fright. They have their own ideas of right and wrong, and will boycott



I SUFFERED THE PENALTIES OF 'BOYCOTT' TILL I LEFT

for an offence against their code. The fisher-folk have a system, in accordance with which the man who supplies the boat for a fishing exploit takes two shares, one for himself, and the other for his boat. One old fellow was excluded from participating in such friendly compacts, being to some extent ostracised, because, *sixty years ago*, he had not given his daughter a sufficiently large dowry on her marriage.

The interior of this old sinner's cabin may be taken as a fair specimen of many. Imagine a room about fifteen feet by ten, and ten feet high, the lion's share of this space being claimed by a fine old mahogany bedstead, the posts of which were beautifully carved. On this from twenty to thirty fowls were roosting. The atmosphere was rendered so dense by the smoke from the turf fire that one could hardly see across the room. A cow and her calf, a pig, and ten or a dozen geese, might, however, be descried. And here, also, lived the old man and his wife, aged eighty-three years; they appeared to be in robust health.

Outside the cottage stood an eighteen-gallon cask, containing butter, the lowest layer of which was twenty years old, as they always both increased and decreased their store from the top!

All about the roads and up the mountains, the pigs or the geese—forty or fifty in flocks—would wander, it might be a mile off, yet the voice or whistle of their respective owners would recall them to their rightful homes—just as of old it was said 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib.' And so, it is said, on the Chinese rivers the ducks will flock back at call to the duck-houses or boats of their owners, in rapid flight, knowing perfectly well that the last comer may expect a blow from the man who shuts them up.

When I had been in residence about a week, the house became a kind of out-patients' dispensary, whither the whole country-side flocked for remedies. I had with me a great quantity of Dr. Scott's pills, which, as everybody knows, are calculated to cure every ailment under the sun. Whether it were paralysis, or rheumatism, or any other ill to which flesh is heir, I administered two, to the great relief of the patient. At least their friends always came for more. They would say: 'Oh, yer Honour—I beg yer pardon, Sorr. Mrs. O'Flaherty is ill, and she's very bad, and she's dying!' and I turned to the pills. The next day there would be a great improvement in her condition, of which I was duly informed, with a demand for the repetition of the dose. They never took advice as to the application of simple remedies to their hand, such as bandages or hot water. The object was to

get something out of one, and they would have greatly preferred taking poison from me to a remedy of their own.

But on one occasion, something more than the pills was found necessary to meet the case. A poor girl was brought to my wife with her hand and arm in a terrible state, having burnt herself by falling on to a turf fire. My wife bound up the burns, dressing them with zinc ointment, for which she sent to London, and tearing up whole garments for the purpose, having no old linen with her. She also wrote to her doctor for advice. Out of gratitude, apparently, the father used to bring round a bottle of milk every morning. We had our own cow, and didn't want the milk, but we appreciated the attention. This went on for about a fortnight, when one day I caught the fellow poaching in the warren. Not knowing the man, and having not the least idea that he was the girl's father, I spoke with exceeding plainness to him. The next morning the man appeared with a bill, and demanded payment for so many pints of milk. As the child's arm must have cost me a sovereign, I said I was quite willing to pay for the milk, but (I do not know what the College of Surgeons will say to this!) I must charge at least a guinea for each attendance on the child. He stood there, till at last I had to take him by the scruff of his neck, and forcibly eject him. A sturdy thick-set fellow, twice my strength, he trembled literally under my hand, but came again next morning, and every morning till I left.

Greed of gain is certainly one of the predominant characteristics of the peasantry, and I cannot say that they are truthful, to put it mildly. I was out on the sound in a boat one evening at low tide, when a tame goose (so-called) flew over. Does anyone know what it is to be sorry for an act, yet to 'do it on purpose'? In a second I had raised my gun and brought down the goose. Well pleased with my excellent shot, I told my man to find out the owner, and offered two-and-six instead of the usual price—eighteenpence—for compensation. He said he would inquire. And then the news spread like wildfire that his Honour at the house had shot a goose, and offered half-a-crown to the owner of it. I soon found that I had shot nine geese—at least that was the number brought to my door next morning. One man *had cut off the head* of his. Not possessing the wisdom of Solomon, I was only able to recognise my goose, and to make a just award by the presence in my victim of the shot which had been her destruction.

We had a tremendous storm one night—a hurricane from the south. Our house, a big stone mansion, shook, and so did we in

In due course the poor Woman, supported by some pathetic Friends, arrived at the House

our beds. Having passed a terrible night, I rose early, fearing to see all the cabins of my poor neighbours razed to the ground. On inquiry I found that there is little danger from such a storm, when accompanied by rain, which soaks the thatch, rendering it heavy and stable. Additional security is obtained by throwing plaited straw over this, weighted by stones and hanging down on either side. My informant added that every man and woman on the estate had passed the night on the beach praying that some large vessel might break on the coast, or that, at the least, a great quantity of wreckage might be washed ashore. But when, at early dawn, the wind veered round two points to the west, and drove the looked-for wreck and prize of wreckage to the opposite shore, they went down on their knees and cursed.

But there was another result of this storm, too typical of their extraordinary character to be omitted here. On walking down to the beach next morning, I found a dead pig, perfectly fresh, which had been washed off some vessel. Now, they never 'ring' a pig, and the result to their pasture is deplorable, as if a plough had passed through. Mine, also, had suffered to such an extent that, at length, I had threatened that if I found a pig on the little piece of pasture belonging to the 'Domain,' as they called it, I would shoot him and not pay as I had for the goose. The present struck me as an excellent opportunity for showing my *bona fides*, so I pulled piggie up on to the shore, and covered him over with seaweed, that he might be hidden till, the shades of night befriending me, I could perpetrate my deed of darkness unseen. At evenfall I dragged him up towards the house, laid him on the forbidden pasture, put one cartridge into his head (it is not often that one shoots a dead pig!) and left him, mute, inglorious. Next morning my Irish servant and his wife, the latter with tears, came to reproach me for the awful thing I had done, assuring me that the poor woman, a widow, whose pig I had murthered, would go out of her mind when she knew. I pretended to be in a great rage—was only sorry I hadn't killed more than one, would kill every pig on the estate if they let them invade my pasture.

In due course the poor woman, supported by some faithful friends, arrived at the house. I am not quite sure, but I fancy the former had put on mourning—at any rate, her grief was as though she had lost her first-born. The whole thing was got up to get three or four pounds out of me. I pretended to be as stone; I laughed at their demands that I should pay a fair and reasonable sum. Then, from the crowd that had gathered, I

took expert opinion as to the value of the pig. Never was pork so high. Ham would have fetched five shillings a pound. I said I would consider the matter, and adjourned the inquiry, my petitioners retiring hopeful but fearing.

For several days I kept them on tenterhooks; I then sent for my servant, who was also in the plot with them, and fully expected the value of a gammon out of it. To him I at length disclosed the whole matter, explaining the criminal and legal aspect of the case. I added that I was going to the resident magistrate for warrants to arrest them for wilful and corrupt perjury with the view of extorting money. I thought the poor fellow's last hour had come. He became as white as a sheet. He and his wife went down on their hands and knees, like Mohammedans worshipping.

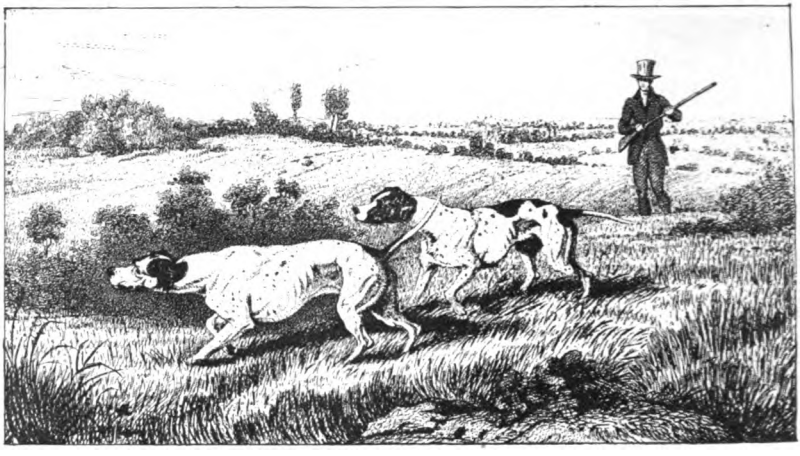
And so the matter ended. But during the rest of my stay in the place, my whilom petitioners kept away from me.

A dark picture this, truly. One wonders where the light comes in, or what it is that makes these people lovable in spite of their faults. A chartered devilry seems to hold them excused; a ready wit and a civil tongue are their powerful passports. An undisciplined race—all talk of bondage to the brutal Saxon notwithstanding—it is emotion, or the uncontrolled impulse of the moment, upon which they chiefly act, the laboured outcome of steady principle they leave for slower, sadder folk. Children of nature they are—nature's *children* still, who have never reached maturity. Their faults are the faults of a childish race, their fears are childish fears, as their beliefs are childish; and the priest is as the nurse who shares the child's belief in the bogey it dreads. These latter are of the people, and deplorably ignorant. They go to Maynooth full of the superstition of their race and class, and when they again set forth they have not left it behind them. Even the popular belief in fairies they share; and one with whom I established friendly relations assured me gravely that the potatoes would never be any larger till Mr. Parnell got Home Rule for Ireland. If the teachers are such, what can their pupils be, who thus see, as it were, the seal of a great Church set to a paganism which is of the soil?

In the outward observances of religion they are not backward. The priest they hold in awe. Both men and women go regularly to Mass. To some this involved a three-mile tramp, the women going barefoot, carrying their shoes. Arrived at the church door, they would scrape their feet against a tombstone, and enter the building shod. Their lying may be regarded as imagination

run riot, the outcome of a dramatic instinct which is as second nature to them, united to a power of expression which is 'nature's very self.' There needs but the touch of conscious humour, with the more than touch of that which is quite unconscious, and you have those finer elements that combined to elevate what I will call 'the Pig Story' into a region far removed from the common fraud, or attempt to extort, the unvarnished crime of a vulgarer race.

Yet how vain the attempt to analyse the *esprit*, the bright and nameless charm which pervades each act of these gay and irresponsible beings! To know is to love them, while detesting their faults. Other nations may lie, but less tolerably; others may deceive, and the tact be wanting. And courtesy counts for something, for these children of nature are also nature's gentle folk.

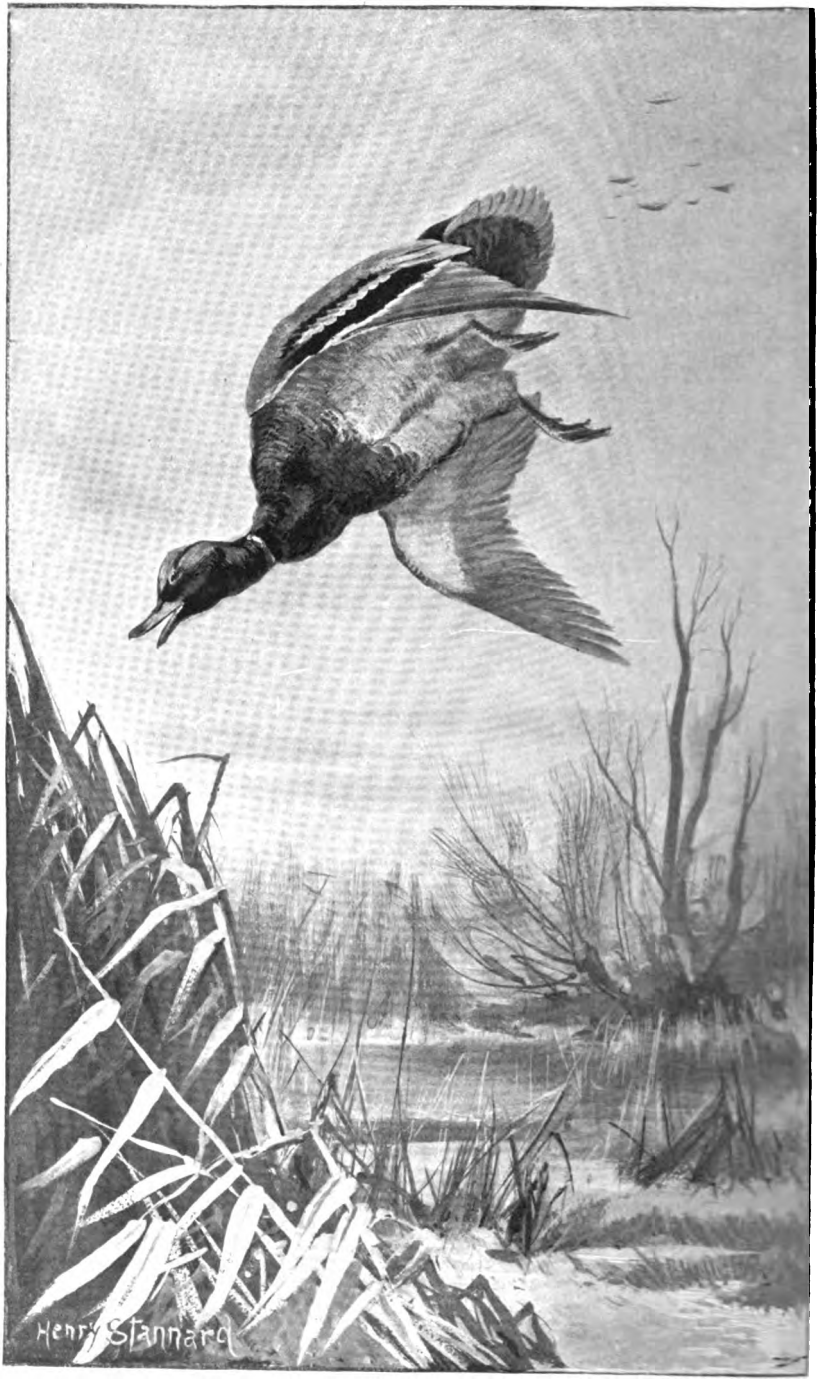


'MARK COCK!'

BY EDWIN L. ARNOLD

A PHILOSOPHER has asserted the shallowness of human intellect —that of philosophers not excepted—by assuring us it is the unexpected which always happens. Perhaps the originator of the adage was a sportsman. Perhaps, when he endowed futurity with this sapient reflection, he had flushed a woodcock where none had been seen for ten months, and, having been too much astonished to fire, thus excused himself, as philosophers will, at the expense of humanity at large. Be this as it may, there is a magic in the cry of 'Cock ahead!' which rouses all our dormant keenness. We have had a great deal of the pheasants; we even entertain a little sympathy for the Frenchman who, longing to get back to his chocolate and boulevards, complains of the invariable partridge in the English autumn country house; but the first woodcock is a revelation.

The hoarfrost is still on the ground as we come, on a typical woodcock morning, on to the open coppice ground where the birds lie. An hour ago, when we were down in the marshes, the rime was thick as snow on everything, and up in the brown fallows the white beads were strong on the shadow sides of the clods. But the higher grounds have been basking in the eye of the sun ever since he rose behind the screen of bare purple



BROUGHT TO BAG A MALLARD

twigs marking the coppice; the frost has risen in a thin white stream, leaving the ground slippery behind it, and adding a gloss to the stems of the ash saplings and a brilliant crimson varnish to the clustering berries of the woodbine where they hang on their green strings across the woodland paths, flaunting their unwholesomeness before man and bird. It is very pleasant up here in these solitudes on the bright autumn mornings. Much company and many tongues at work would spoil everything. But, instead of that, we are but three guns, all told, each as dour to outward seeming as a Scotch elder who has been down the glen to pay his rent. A couple of brown-coated keepers between us spread the line sufficiently as we walk in silence through the woods, and a brace of red spaniels flirt about the bracken and bramble ahead, with never a whimper to tell of the keen pleasure which keeps their noses twitching and their expressive tails on the wave.

We have been down, as I have said, on the marshes; and in the course of an hour, over rush and grass that crackled in the sharp morning air like the white crust of a Twelfth cake, have brought to bag a mallard, half a dozen snipe, and a heron destined for a glass case at the Hall, which the boy in the rear who carries our cartridges is now wearing round his neck like some gigantic grey muffler. We beat over a ten-acre bit of brown plough, picking up a couple of solitary partridges, as well as a hare; and now, as the ground slopes upwards, and the old weedy highway that once echoed to the wheels of Saxon chariots is crossed, we pass from the glebe into the copse-wood, where rabbits are a certainty and outlying pheasants more than likely. Away go the red spaniels in a delirium of suppressed excitement, while down come the beaters' encouraging sticks on the ash stumps; and the first thing that moves is a 'bunny,' who flashes along a grassy path, twists sharp to the right just as my companion's shot patters through the bramble leaves that sheltered him a second before, and, ere any of us can get a clear sight of him again, is away into the depth of the brushwood.

'Hum!' says Rover to his four-footed companion in expressive canine language, 'that at least was not our fault!'

Well, these things will happen; and the rabbits, which are often considered only good enough for schoolboys to learn shooting upon, will, we know, sometimes put the most experienced shot to shame.

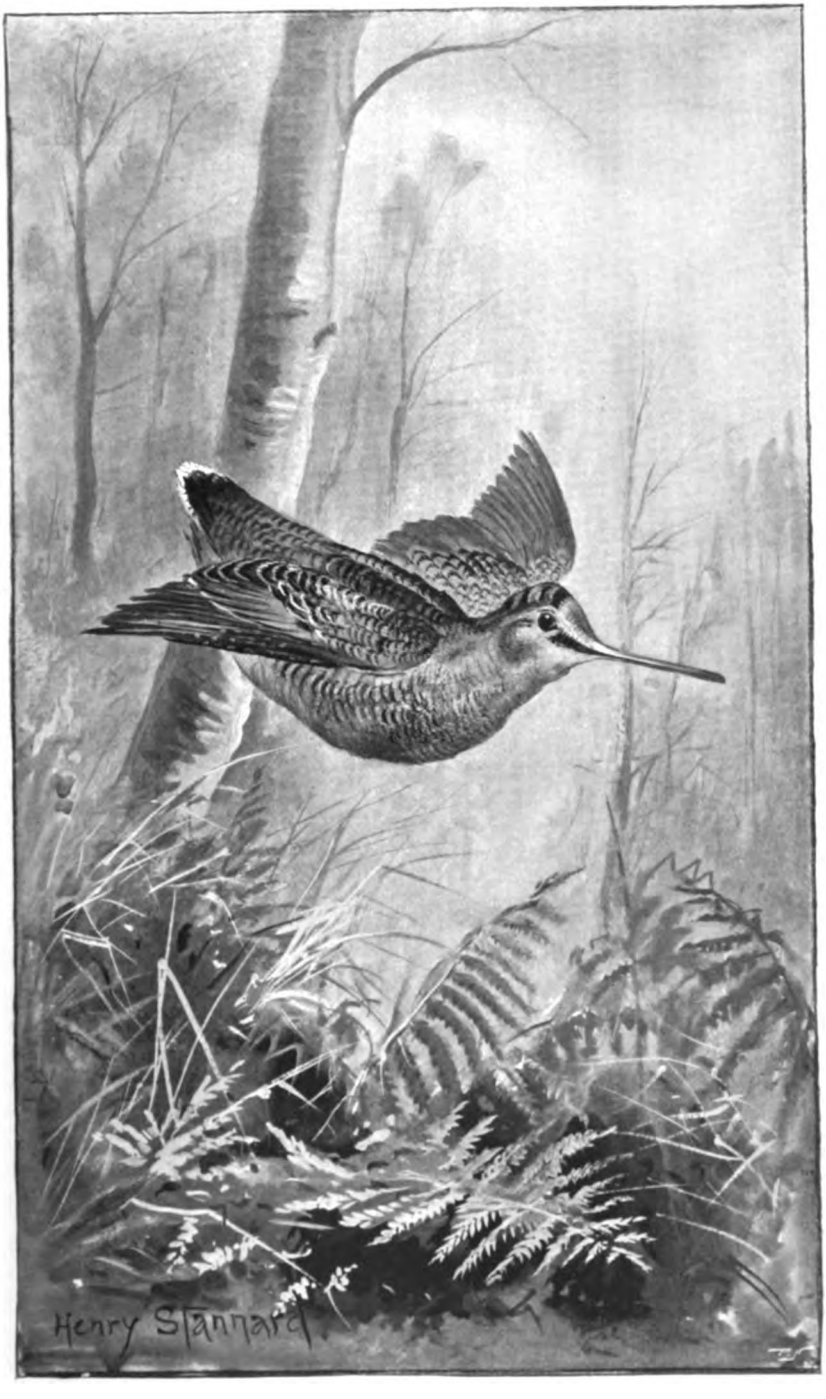
It is not long before 'Number 2' gets an opportunity of redeeming his credit, a brace of bunnies starting up from under

a bush right in front; and both are brought to bag with a pretty right and left as they diverge at their best pace on either side.

But we are now amongst a thin growth of birch trees, clumps of holly here and there looming through the slender veil of their twigs, and some prettily prattling runnels picking their way down the hillsides between the birch roots or thick bunches of tussock grass. It is going that requires a considerable amount of attention, if one is not to plunge ankle-deep at every step. Suddenly the red setter gives an irrepressible yap, a brown something rises from a runnel twenty yards in front of the line with superlative grace and swiftness, and almost before any of us can steady ourselves, it tops the birch trees and goes away 'like painted lightning' down the glade. It is a bare chance at the best. 'Mark cock!' the beaters shout in sympathetic chorus. A couple of shots are fired so simultaneously that, it was afterwards ascertained, the third man was only aware one had been discharged; and walking up to the special birch bush whose upper twigs are frayed and broken by the hustling lead, there lies the first woodcock of the season, dead at its roots.

We stroke him admiringly before he is added to the bag. A few weeks later that russet plumage and those soft owl-like wings will be familiar enough; but this is the firstling of the brown autumn woods, the embodiment of the changing season, and as such commands our liveliest admiration. However, there are possibly more where he came from; and as the 'cock' goes into the keeper's capacious pouch, we settle down to work once more, beating keenly through the long tussock grass, even the very setters seeming to feel the renewed importance of the occasion.

On our right, J. has just confided to us that he has changed his No. 6 cartridges for No. 7 when the dogs set again. We walk cautiously up to them, mentally trying to recall all the good advice preciously stored up as to the exact moment to fire at *Scolopax rusticola*—whether to take him on the spring or to wait until he is skimming over the tree-tops with that peculiarly deceptive flight he affects. We have just comfortably settled this matter to our satisfaction, when the dogs rush in, and from under their very noses flutter up a covey of partridges! And the worst of it is, the partridge does not rise in the least like a woodcock, as one of the party sadly pointed out afterwards. He springs often with his front towards you, standing straight up on his ruddy tail, as it were, until the wind fills those nervous round wings of his; then away he goes in a strong curve, like



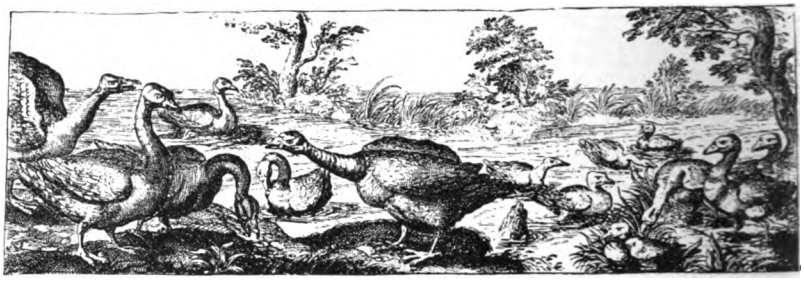
'MARK COCK!'

an express turning round a hillside, and before you have recalled the details of that geometrical problem propounded by your trusted guide-book on the shelves at home, wherein A B represents the trajectory of your shot and C D the swift parabola of the bird's flight, he has dropped like lead over the scarp of the hill, and left you shamed and indecisive.

These at least reflect the emotions of the novice on such occasions; but we are not all novices, and the result of our *feu de joie* at the covey is a couple of brace, all well stopped. Two more rabbits from the boundary hedgerow, and an unhappy pheasant who comes swooping in behind our line from no one knows where, and pays the penalty of his rashness, brings us to the wood-chopper's shed, at which our lunch has arrived from the Hall, and is already spread invitingly for us.

Such a meal asks for short grace and no sauce. We are as hungry as the proverbial hunters. A wren on the topmost twig of the faggot roof says benediction for us in a diminutive song of limpid sweetness, and we fall with glorious appetites on the good things. It is worth the fatigues of a morning's tramp to feel the blood tingling into our legginged legs again as we stretch them out upon the carpet of dry oak leaves; and the faint, fine odour of the ash chips which lie about on the woodland mosses presently blends delightfully with the scent of our cigar.

We feel we could sit an hour or two talking modern woodcraft under such circumstances, but our inflexible leader will not hear of it. There are still a couple of rough grass meadows to be beaten, a mile or so of beech hanger to be tried for 'cock' before the yellow sun, already low, goes down; and a long bit of water meadow, beloved of teal and snipe, deserving attention; so we march again. A characteristic bird or two from each of those beats satisfies our modest ambitions, and we arrive home while the flame colour of a frosty sunset is still hanging in the eastern sky, full of a satisfaction out of all proportion to our bag, and with only just that tiredness which dinner, a game of billiards, and a good night's sleep will certainly cure.



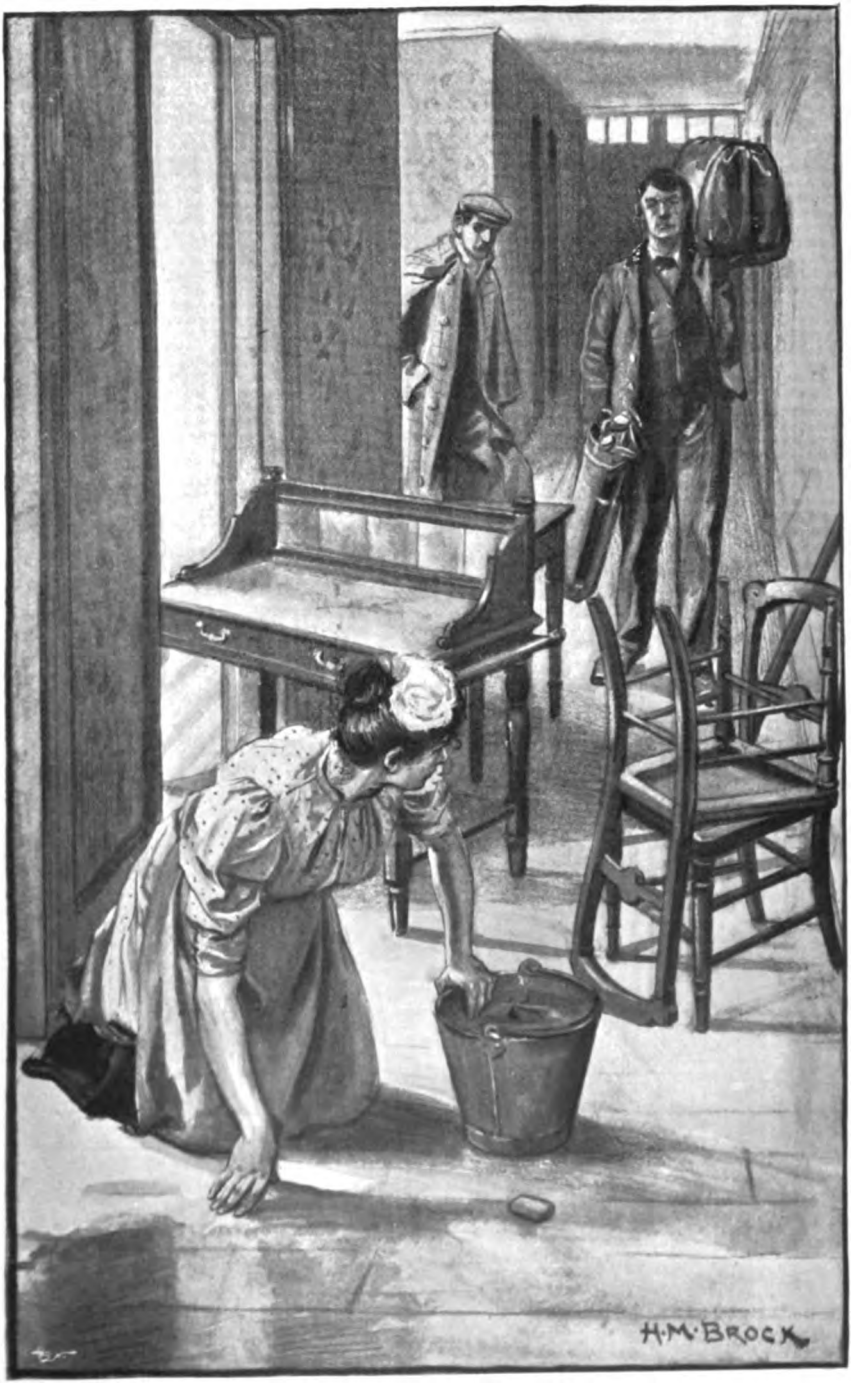
A CHAT WITH 'THE COLONEL'

BY GARDEN G. SMITH

I WANTED a change. Hard work, without fresh air or exercise, had played sad havoc with my nerves, and I was feeling much run down. So I took my doctor's advice, and went home and packed my bag and my golf-clubs. The question of where to go was soon settled. I bethought me that it was five years since I had been to Scotland, and, dinner over, I drove to King's Cross and took the night express for Edinburgh. All through the long night I lay sleepless, and the grey March dawn coming in just as we crossed the Border revealed Scotland once more in its most cheerless aspect. A gale from the south-east was blowing—the kind of gale I remembered so well, with sheets of rain that smote, as with a lash, upon the steaming panes of the carriage. Looking across the flat lands to the sea, the white breakers were just visible, crawling under their curtain of mist.

Is there anything in the world more depressing to the mind than a Scotch railway-station on such a morning? Puddles everywhere. The miserable attempts at ornamental gardening by the line side, the stumps of cabbages in the station-master's garden; the desolation of rows of grimy waggons covered with black tarpaulin; coals and cinders; the dinginess and squalor of the station, the maddening incongruity and persistence of advertisement, sour and tepid coffee, and, over all, the pouring rain, produce, in combination, an effect on the mind from which immediate suicide seems the only possible escape.

The weather was, if possible, worse when I arrived at North Berwick. Everybody was clad in waterproofs. The roads ran like rivers, and the links were desolate and cheerless. 'Come,' said I to myself, 'pull yourself together; let not the gloomy



SPRING CLEANING WAS IN FULL-CRY

aspect of the present hour cloud the fair possibilities of the future. To-morrow the sun will shine, the wind will fall, and on these links, where at present no living thing is to be seen, you will be playing golf with some agreeable stranger whom you will presently meet in the comfortable Marine Hotel, towards which this rattling 'bus is even now bearing you.' But alas! worse was to follow. The 'Marine' I found practically guestless. Spring cleaning was in full-cry. The painters were in, the carpets were up. The contents of all the bed- and sitting-rooms, standing on their heads, blocked all the passages, and servant-maids, with pails and scrubbing-brushes, were scouring and slopping all over the place.

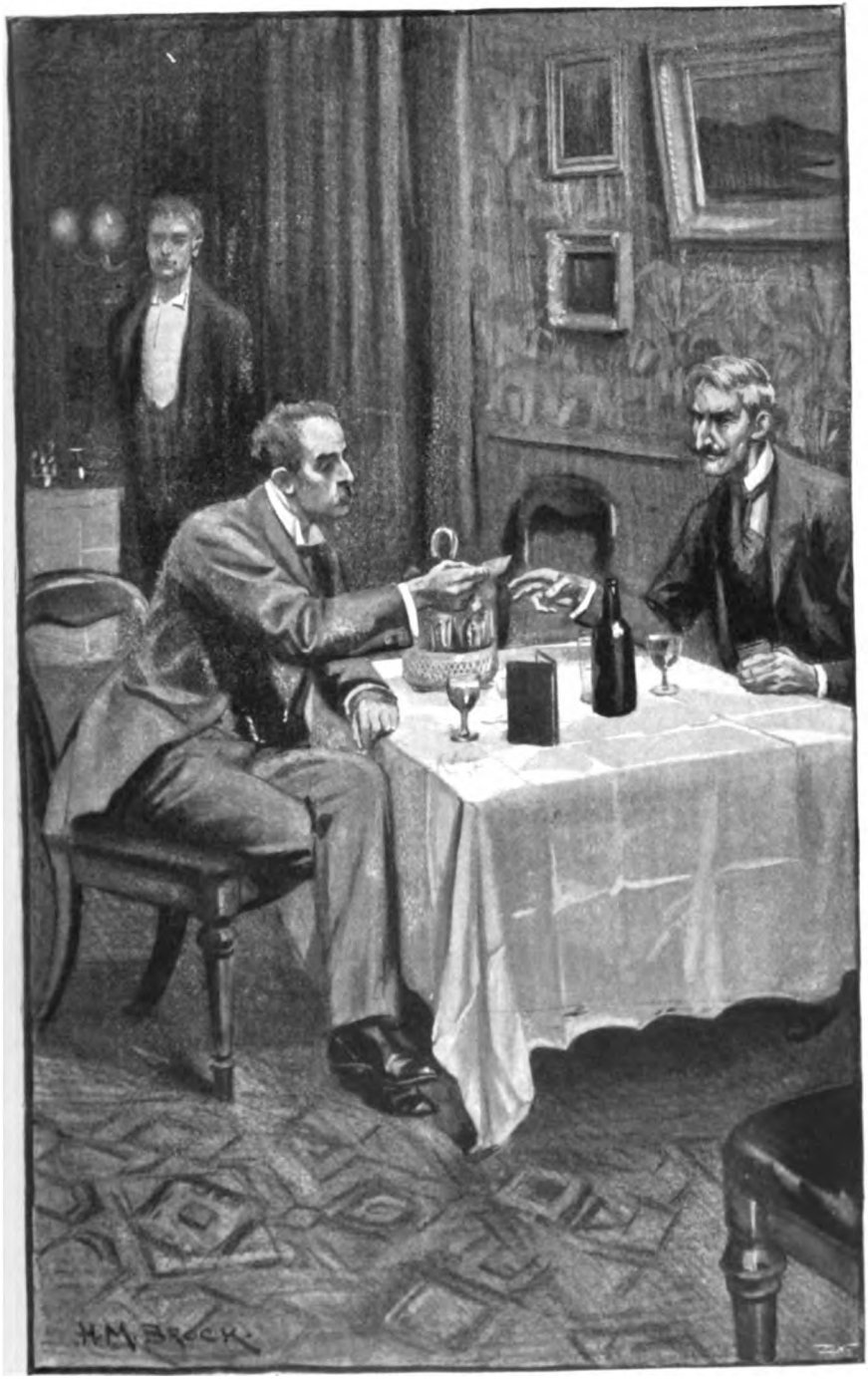
However, I managed to get a bedroom that had passed the cleaning ordeal, and with the help of a good fire, a comfortable chair, and many pipes, I got through the day somehow, reading and writing letters, and about five o'clock I fell asleep in my chair. When I awoke it was dark, and I felt cold and very hungry. I rang the bell, and was glad to hear from the waiter who came in answer to my summons that dinner was ready whenever I desired it. I speedily changed my things and descended to the dining-room. The huge room was mostly in darkness and seemed tenantless; but the dinner and the Burgundy were excellent, and I strove, with some success, to forget the storm, which still raged outside, and the loneliness and discomfort of my surroundings. I made up my mind that, be the weather what it might, I should play golf on the morrow. If I found nobody else of my way of thinking, Sayers, I knew, would not fail me; and if he were engaged, Big Crawford or Sandy Smith would be foemen worthy of my steel, and would not mind a wetting. I was absorbed in these stoical reflections, and meditating coffee and a cigar, when Gustav, the Swiss waiter, brought me a message to say that the gentleman sent his compliments, and would be glad if I would join him at his table. Looking hastily round I discovered, seated at a small table in a far corner of the room, a tall, thin, military-looking man of distinguished appearance, with iron-grey hair. A moment later I crossed over and thanked him for his courtesy, and he replied, with great politeness, that the obligation was on his side. After some commonplaces on the state of the weather and the emptiness of the hotel, my new friend, who had also finished dinner, suggested that a little port would not be amiss, and over our first glass I learned that, like myself, he meditated golf. The conversation thereupon naturally turned upon golfing matters, and I was much struck with the accurate knowledge which the stranger displayed

of the game, and with the authoritative tone and spirit of his remarks. He seemed to have been everywhere, and from his incidental allusions to his own play, which were not made in any boastful spirit, I could gather that he was no mean performer. There seemed to be no green, either in this country or abroad, with which he was unfamiliar, and no golfer of any eminence, amateur or professional, with whom he had not played, and of whom he had not some interesting reminiscence to relate. We presently got quite friendly and confidential. We arranged to play together in the morning, fair weather or foul—my companion said it was all the same to him—and after discussing a great many mutual acquaintances, and finding that he knew my name, I ventured to ask him for his. He suddenly looked grave, and for answer produced a red morocco card-case, from which he handed me a card. Printed in red ink, in flowing characters, I read the following:—

COL. B. BOGEY,

LATE D.O. DRAGOONS.

I was thunderstruck. I stammered out that I was very glad to make his acquaintance, and that his name was, of course, quite familiar to me. Regarding me keenly, and, I thought, a trifle severely, he said: 'You will perhaps be good enough, sir, not to divulge my identity either here or on the green. I am travelling just now strictly *incognito*, for reasons which you may be able to conjecture. For some cause or other there is a distinct prejudice against me in Scotland, and I am here to investigate it. Men whose golfing incompetence is only equalled by their historical ignorance keep prating about the ancient traditions of the game, and allude to me in this connexion in a disrespectful manner. A strong party, both at St. Andrews and Muirfield, are pleased to entertain the delusion that I am entirely of English extraction, when my very name might have convinced them of their error. I am of the Bogies of Strathbogie, and it was only for private family reasons, not unconnected with the disruption of the Kirk, that my father left Scotland and we changed the spelling of our name. But long before I ever set foot on an English green I



HE HANDED ME A CARD

played many a match against the best players of Elie and Leven, and even of St. Andrews itself.'

I hastened to assure him of my sympathy, and that I would not betray his confidence.

'The absurd provincialism of St. Andrews,' pursued the Colonel, filling his glass, 'to call it by no stronger name, which is shared and encouraged by the Honourable Company, is inimical to the best interests of the game, and will inevitably result in the vast golfing public taking the control of golfing matters into their own hands. In former times the wealth and power of these clubs, coupled with the fact that they numbered in their ranks all the best amateur golfers, and were the patrons of all the professional talent in the country, gave them an authority that nobody could question. But with the spread of the game, with the rise of equally influential and wealthy clubs, and the formation of first-class greens all over the kingdom; with the amateur and open championships being won by English and Scottish golfers altogether outside the pale of St. Andrews, that authority has been sapped and mined, and the ridiculous and hidebound conservatism that refuses to listen to the reasonable and necessary modifications of the ancient law, which the new conditions demand, can only end, as I have said, in the creation of a new representative legislative authority, in which St. Andrews may indeed have a voice, but no longer a controlling one.'

The Colonel spoke with some heat, and it was with a good deal of diffidence that I ventured to point out that the Royal and Ancient Club had at least consented to the representation of certain other clubs at their meetings in regard to the championship arrangements. 'All that,' replied he, 'is of no use. It is only a partial concession, most reluctantly dragged from them, and they take good care to maintain themselves as the predominant partner in the arrangement. The rules for the amateur championship itself are notoriously unfair, and it happens time after time that the man who is playing the best game at the meeting gets knocked out owing to the fortuitous nature of the draw, being exhausted with a succession of stiff encounters, and the trophy is won by some outsider who has had nothing to beat all the way through.

'The rules of the game itself, badly tinkered at St. Andrews in 1891, want revising and simplifying. At present they are too complex, and in too many cases are quite inadequate to meet the requirements of golf on other greens, quite as good as St. Andrews, but with a different disposition of holes and hazards. A simplification of the law in regard to penalty, so as to suit all greens, is urgently demanded; and the rules dealing with the employment

and behaviour of caddies are also badly in want of revision, in view of altered circumstances.'

The Colonel seemed thoroughly wound up, and to change the conversation—though I felt the delicacy of the subject—I tried to get him to talk about his own game by saying that I thought the quality of first-class golf was steadily improving. He agreed with me that it was, and in proof of it he alluded, with some complacency, to the fact that his own score on most links was gradually being reduced. Seeing him in a better temper, and using the utmost discretion in my language, I then asked him whether he found that the absolute certainty of his own play did not seriously interfere with his enjoyment of the game; that it seemed to me, looking to the peculiar conditions under which he played, that the game must be robbed of much of its pleasure and excitement by the inevitable nature of his performance. 'There, sir,' he said, 'you betray an ignorance and want of reflection that surprise me. It is true, of course, as you say, that my score for a given hole never varies. But, say that I do it in five, there are twenty ways of reaching the bottom in that number, and I constantly exercise my fancy in the manner by which I register the required number of strokes. Sometimes I top my tee shot, or I bunker myself and require two to get out, but by a magnificent recovery, or by holing a mashie shot or a long putt, I never fail to make the balance even. Again, I sometimes find myself within a foot of the hole in a stroke short of my proper number; I miss the short putt and the thing is done. In addition, I never have the mortification of having to tear up my card half-way round, and I win many more matches than I lose. I assure you, sir, that the sense of power and mastery I possess in extricating myself from an apparently hopeless position more than compensates for my inability to beat records; for which pursuit, indeed,' he added, 'I have never had any taste.'

'I wonder,' said I, 'Colonel, that you have never entered for the amateur cham——;' but the Colonel was yawning and looked a trifle bored, so I presently wished him 'good-night.'

In the morning, when Gustav brought me my tea, the sun was shining brightly, and I asked him if the Colonel was up yet. He stared at me with his blue Swiss eyes, and I repeated my question, adding, 'The gentleman who was at dinner last night?' 'But, sare,' he said, 'you have dine by yourself; there was not no other gentlemans beside.'

After a pause I said, 'Gustav, I will not have any Burgundy to-night.'

A POACHING AFFRAY

BY SUSAN, COUNTESS OF MALMESBURY

It was a lovely morning in October. The sun was bright, the air was crisp and frosty, but, although it seemed quite clear, a soft haze hung about the branches of the trees and clothed the distance with a delicate blue veil. Transparent and ethereal cobwebs, 'threads of the virgin,' as they say in France, floated, with long and glistening tendrils, shoulder-high across the sandy road. On either side the way, tall, red-stemmed firs rose up, while down below their sinewy grip upon the soil was lost in dark-green rhododendrons, now at rest after the mad reckless wealth of blossom which they tendered to each passer all the month of June. Here and there along the road a dark-eyed squirrel impudently ran across; a golden pheasant—alone of all his tribe to brave the chill of rhododendron-covers—flashed out for a short bright moment e'er he hid that coveted attire, at once his glory and undoing, from the prowling tramp.

High overhead, where open spaces in the woods afford a chance, a peregrine swung lightly in the breeze, circling, or poised, with outstretched wings, keen vision fixed, and senses all alive with hunger and desire for blood, while in the river down below the wild-duck crouched and turned an iridescent head and curious eye to watch the common foe.

Further up the road the covers change their character, and there, among the heather and young larch, brown pheasants, hares and black game find a home, with snipe and woodcock in their season, while, in a winding tributary stream, the sheldrake and goosander lie concealed, and little clouds of teal rise up alarmed, to wheel in unison and sink again before the quiet weather tempts them out to sea.

Few people pass this way, save those that have affairs with the Great House, off to the left beyond the 'county' bridge. The little wayside inn, the 'Rose and Crown,' could scarcely drive a roaring trade even in its palmy days, but now it harbours chiefly cyclists, an abstemious, hardy race, with one idea, and that a photographic one, and one absorbing universal need for ginger-beer and buns.

Far behind, on the junction of two rivers, where they fall into the sea, sprawls the sleepy scattered town of Twyneham, and, before us, Ringwood Heath stretches for miles towards Cranbourne, which, to the local mind, looms like infinity, mysterious and admittedly beyond the grasp of human reason. On this bright morning, faintly and from far away, towards Twyneham, floated the sounds, first of a horse's feet and next of wheels, while presently, round a sharp curve in the road, where it follows the windings of the river, came into sight a pony cart with plain brown harness and varnished panels glistening in the sun. The pony, closely clipped, was now the colour of a mouse, whatever may have been his coat a month or two ago. His nose being towards his stable, and the hour of that square mid-day meal, to which his plump form did such credit, being close at hand, he had a greater mind to go than his little mistress, who was driving him, assisted by a solemn groom, so tightly buckled in his livery that he could barely wink an eye.

Havis D'Abernon was returning from a meeting of a charitable society, where she had presided that morning, resigned and patient, bored to the verge of tears, small and forlorn and very young, beside the portly and experienced dames of whom her committee consisted. Her spirits had risen with freedom from constraint and the fresh sharp autumn air, while, with the exertion of holding in her peppery little cob, a bright soft flush had risen in her cheek to glorify her childish face and dreamy eyes.

Sir Charles and she had just returned from Scotland, and were now settled at Avonsworth, his Hampshire place, for the pheasant shooting and a series of house-parties.

But there had been trouble lately among the neighbouring squires—all strict preservers of game—for a rough determined gang of poachers was about, so that both keepers and watchers slept with one eye open, and took their meals when fortune sent them. It was known that an ugly case would come on at the next Assizes. How would it end? Would the verdict be manslaughter or murder, who could say? This question filled men's minds: how to be armed sufficiently to defend what is legally your

property, to say nothing of your own life if attacked, and yet keep clear of tragedies such as that on which a man's fate now hung suspended in the balance.

A kind of help yourself (to your neighbours' goods) association appeared to have established itself in a village of evil repute, a suburb of the neighbouring town of Valebourne, whence on dark nights, or even in broad daylight, raiding parties emerged, armed for scientific warfare both with man and beast.

Now Sir Charles D'Abernon's head-keeper, though a keeper, was a man of peace. In twenty years he had never been known to catch a poacher, and yet his beat was better stocked with game than any of the others! You might meet him at odd hours, along the road or in the covers, looking half asleep, but sly and full of country cunning, and with 'weather eye well lifted.' It was whispered that he paid blackmail to the more notorious poachers of the district, but if Sir Charles could waive that question and look only to results, however strange the facts might seem, surely it is not for us to be inquisitive.

Lady D'Abernon, as she met him sauntering on his rounds that morning, stopped to consult him as to the health of her pet Japanese puppy, which was giving her some anxiety. 'Grows, does she?' answered Spicer, with a scarcely veiled contempt for anything but sporting dogs, a sentiment of which 'Mousmi' showed her appreciation by shrill uninterrupted yapping. 'You send her to me, my lady; a sight better for her and my pheasants too. 'Pears to have a nose, she does. I finds her hunting by herself; she'll get into a gin.'

Havis, defeated, unable to cope with Spicer's patronising depreciation of her beautiful pet, changed the subject by an inquiry as to whether a great many pheasants' eggs had been stolen that spring.

'Ah!' said the keeper, with a grin, which he endeavoured with poor success to control as disrespectful. 'There was that Thorne; him as had a sick wife, what your Ladyship sent to the horsespital. I see'd un, one day, up along, by the river, after eggs. I'd found the nest afore he did, the rascal! and I knowed the eggs was bad. So I waited for un in the road, and as he come along I see'd his jacket bulging out one side. And, "Mornin'!" says I, "mornin', Thorne!" and hit un friendly-like across the pocket with my stick. *I* knowed well enough what lay inside that pocket, but I couldn't touch un on the King's highway. No more I didn't want to, for them eggs was sich, when they was broke—there worn't no going nearst un for a month!'

This realistic account of Spicer's favourite methods of game-preserving satisfied Havis's thirst for information, and, not knowing what other anecdotes might follow in its train, she loosed her restless pony's reins, and drove on to a cottage higher up the road, while Spicer dawdled grinning on his way.

HIT UN FRIENDLY-LIKE ACROSS THE POCKET WITH MY STICK

Arrived at her destination, Havis sprang out, on charitable thoughts intent, and left the groom to hold the pony at the cottage door. For some minutes she sat talking to the various inmates of the house, hearing their woes, and promising help or admonishing where it was needed; a lecture she could never

bring herself to administer, and many a time her leniency to wrong-doers made the old Rector shake his head and give her good advice.

All at once, just as she had got through the rheumatics of the grandmother, the strange and complicated diseases of the invalid daughter, and was safely launched upon the whooping cough and measles of the latest baby in the family, there was a great commotion outside, and, running to the gate, she was just in time to see a horse and spring cart, with two men in it, gallop past at full speed. The men were lashing their beast with all their might, and had already passed the cottage when Havis got out, so that she only saw their backs. The cob was violently excited, and the groom had enough to do to hold him.

'What was that?' cried Havis; 'the horse was surely not running away?'

'No, my lady,' cried the groom; 'they were thrashing him along. I should know them anywhere. I saw their faces well. They'd been up to no good, I'll swear, up there on Ringwood Heath!'

Just as he had done speaking, a game-watcher came running for his life along the road, pale as death, already panting pretty hard, and asking if a cart had passed that way.

He and an under-keeper had been watching on the Heath when they heard the sound of a shot. They ran to the spot, and gave chase to a man with a gun and a pheasant in his hand, but he got clean away into the road, jumped into a cart, which was waiting for him, and galloped off. They had then taken a short cut across the fields, and, springing at the horse's head, had tried to catch him by the bit. But the poachers had struck them across the face, whipped up the horse, and driven over them. His mate, he said, lay bleeding on the road five hundred yards away.

Here he started off at full speed after the cart, while Havis's one thought was to go at once to the assistance of the wounded man.

Presently they came upon him, sitting on the ground, wiping his damaged face with a large red pocket-handkerchief. But the picturesque and varied flow of language which proceeded from his cut and bleeding lips soon reassured the groom, if not the inexperienced Havis, as to the extent of the injuries inflicted. He refused all assistance, but begged for the pony cart to catch up his assailants. This was granted him after some hesitation, and soon Havis was left standing in the road, while the disappointed cob, farther from his dinner than ever, vanished at a great pace out of sight.

She herself ran home across the fields, and arrived late for luncheon, to find Sir Charles wondering a little as to her whereabouts, but reading his paper in a fairly tranquil state of mind.

'Well!' he exclaimed, when he had heard her story, 'what on earth were you about not to have let the men give chase at once, instead of losing time in going after Frampton? Now they will very likely get away altogether.'

But Havis could not, she felt, have left the under-keeper wounded on the road, and not attended to his hurts, although they proved to be so far removed from mortal, while, at the same time, she nursed a secret wish that the poachers might escape. Her tender heart inspired her with the hope that, if they only got a chance, they now might mend their ways.

She ventured to emit the latter aspiration, but her spouse pooh-poohed this view of things as sentimental and romantic.

However, as nothing could be done, he sat down to his lunch with equanimity, and made his little wife, still pale and shaken with the unwonted sight of blood and violence, swallow what food she could, and then go off to rest herself.

'At any rate,' he said to himself, 'if they do get away now, they are sure to be known to the police hereabouts, and James saw them face to face and can identify them.'

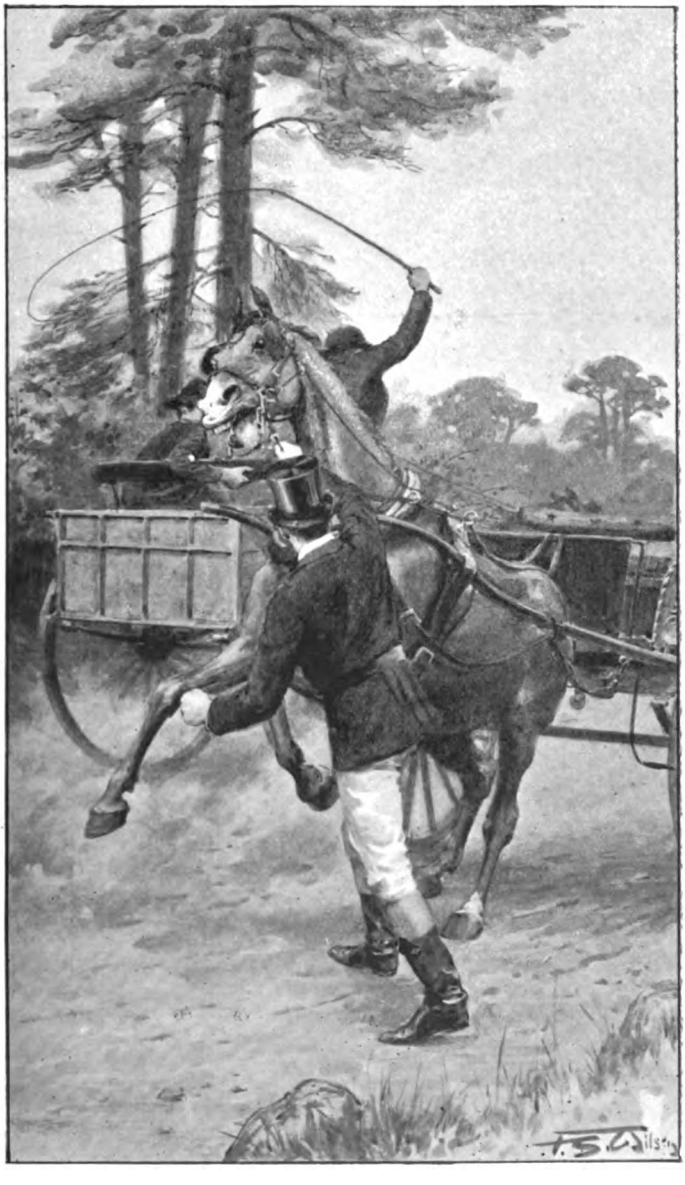
Meanwhile, James Frampton and the cob were posting off towards Valebourne. They crossed the river, and came to a steep pitch, where the road was heavy with the loose gravel and sand all too liberally bestowed upon its surface by the Local Highway Board in that district. 'Who drives fat cattle should himself be fat;' but Frampton, thin and wiry, smarting moreover with pain and mortification, would not hear of easing the cob when he began to show signs of distress. As a result, when they got to the outskirts of Valebourne, it became evident that some other means of locomotion must be found.

James pulled up at a wayside inn, while his companion ran on to prosecute inquiries in likely places, promising to return shortly.

The former drove into the yard, where he saw a cart standing, and taking out his lame and streaming beast, proceeded to lead him into the stable.

Here he found two men busy rubbing down a horse, still panting and covered with foam. As he entered one looked up, ran to the stable-door, and put his back against it.

'Are you the chaps I see just now on Ringwood Heath?' said James, trapped and abject.



THE GROOM HAD ENOUGH TO DO TO HOLD HIM

'And what if we are, mate?' answered he with his back against the door.

'What of that?' replied James; 'why, I seed you plain, and you've pretty near killed a keeper.'

'We'll pretty nigh kill you, if you don't keep a quiet tongue in your head,' said the man on guard.

Here his companion, who had been grooming the horse, looked round and caught sight of James's face.

'Hallo!' said he—while James, white as a sheet, dropped the cob's bridle and staggered back against the wall—'I see you've not forgotten that little job we was on together in '92, when you was out of a situation! He was the clumsy fool that got me lagged; he won't peach; you can let him go,' he went on to his mate, who moved away from the stable-door. Then—suddenly changing his tone—'Get out of this ye white-faced cur! and dare to say again ye seed us plain!'

He flung the door wide open, and James, crumpled up and shivering, led out his horse and harnessed him again.

Slowly and painfully he took the homeward road, the cob dead lame, and hanging his whilom jaunty little head.

During all this time, at Avonsworth, the hours passed away, and brought no tidings of the groom or cob. The local police made a report; Spicer also made his appearance, and stated that he had seen them from a distance, but had nothing to add to Havis's account of the affair, except that there was no doubt in his mind the poachers would make for Valebourne, where, in his opinion, every scoundrel in the county had his lair, and where the tide, which 'drew from out that boundless deep' of wickedness, would be sure, in his opinion, to 'turn again home.' Of James he merely said: 'Poor lookin' tool he is. I allow he won't be much use to we.'

Sir Charles dismissed him, and the afternoon wore on, but no news came. The evening then set in, and Havis and her husband, dressed for dinner, sat waiting in the drawing-room for the gong to sound.

'I quite expect to hear that James has thrown down your cob,' said Sir Charles, 'and broken his knees; he has had to walk him home, and that is why he is so late. He might have gone three times over to Valebourne and back the time he has been away.' But that moment the gong sounded, and the butler entered the room to announce both dinner and the arrival of the errant James.

As soon as the dessert had been placed on the table, James

appeared to give an account of himself. 'Yes, Sir Charles,' he replied, all in one word, 'we went after the cart as hard as we could go, but the cob, he's terrible fat, he is, and we had to ease him up the hills.

'No, Sir Charles, we didn't catch 'em up. They went towards Valebourne, according to what we heard tell along the road, and

SAT WAITING IN THE DRAWING-ROOM

when we got there the cob fell lame. I had to put him up at the "White Horse."'

'Yes, yes,' interrupted Sir Charles; 'but I have just heard from the police that two men with a cart, and a horse all in a lather, turned into the yard there just before you did. You saw the men on the Heath, and told her Ladyship you could identify them anywhere.'

'Yes, Sir Charles.'

'Well, and did you identify them?'

'No, Sir Charles, I couldn't exactly say as I did.'

Here James's face lost all expression and never regained it during the rest of the interview. He was the only man who had had a clear view of the poachers' faces, as Frampton, the under-keeper, had been struck across the eyes and mouth and half-blinded as soon as he got to the horse's head, while the watcher was no better off, and Havis had only seen their backs.

After a moment's examination of the man's blank and sullen countenance, 'You can go,' said his master, and he went.

The cob's temper never recovered the bucketing he received that day, and he had to be degraded from the service of his indulgent lady to that of carrying the daily mails between Twyneham and Avonsworth, so that for years his plump figure and general naughtiness were a well-known sight upon the road. James was shortly filled with an ardent desire, instilled into him by the coolness of his fellow-servants, to better himself. He was not pressed to remain, while Spicer read his underlings a lecture upon tactics, which, let us hope, they profit by, even to this day, keeping clear of violence, and resorting to the more refined artistic methods of their chief.

RACEHORSES AND OTHERS IN 1897

BY F. J. RIDGWAY

In this short *résumé* of the racing incidents of 1897, it is not my intention to try to explain how it was that the Flirt filly, after beating the Breach of Promise colt at Lincoln on March 22, easily succumbed to that animal at Windsor on April 1, over identically the same distance, at the same weights, and with the same distinguished horsemen in the saddle. That way madness lies. Rather would I discuss certain features which appear to be in some way peculiar to this present year, and notable indeed among these stand out the successes of Irish horses. That island, as far as 1897 is concerned, should no longer be pitiably described as the 'distressful country;' rather should it triumphantly be re-christened the successful land. It remains, of course, for future years to enlighten us as to whether these successes are like another celebrated product of the green island, merely of a streaky character, or whether they have really come to stay. There can be no doubt, however, that many of the inhabitants have already, directly and indirectly, largely benefited by the victories of Irish horses. Both trainers and owners who have lately visited Ireland with a view to buying have found the happy proprietors fully alive to the enhanced value of their possessions, and this applies to jumpers as well as to flat-race horses; but if they are good salesmen, there can be no doubt that, taking them all round, they are right good sportsmen too; and their luck must be a source of congratulation to all Englishmen who take a right interest in the well-being of the Turf.

With all due respect and admiration for our French friends, it would have been a lamentable circumstance if they had selected this particular season for making one of their celebrated descents on English racecourses, and sweeping off the majority of our

valuable prizes. The consideration they have displayed in not doing so is probably as much owing to the moderate quality of their horses as to the fact of their recognising that our great Jubilee year should be sacred to English and colonial animals. With regard to our so-called classic horses, I fear we must admit that they have hardly risen to the occasion either by their appearance or performances. Galtee More is undoubtedly a really good-looking and, what is I think still better, a sporting-looking horse; but for most of the others, perhaps it would be kinder to dismiss them by saying that their beauty was of the skin-deep order—though Frisson has had a near shave of being a really fine-looking beast, and Chittabob may yet get something to win him a great reputation. St. Simon mares—though, if good for anything, all wire and whipcord—would certainly never command the prices they do on account of their fatal beauty; and what would Chelàndry fetch if entered to be sold at Tattersall's on an off day, without any announcement of her pedigree, to an audience that did not recognise her? Would she on the score of looks alone fetch the price of a good polo pony? The thing one chiefly fears about Galtee More is that he is not a genuine stayer, and a few more victories of the same character as his Leger triumph would have been almost as bad as a crushing defeat. That over a mile, or say a mile and a quarter, he is some pounds better than any other of his year, he has I think conclusively proved; but were he to meet Velasquez over the Leger distance in a fast-run race, I fancy we should see an exciting struggle, as there can be little doubt that Lord Rosebery's horse has lately been coming on in a way which it is always hard to estimate; his very defeat by Love Wisely, at level weights, having regard to the field behind him, and the terms on which he was meeting them, proves this. It is all very well for Galtee More's numerous friends to argue that the L[illegible] was an entirely false-run race, that the near squeak their champion had of experiencing his first three-year-old defeat was owing to this fact alone, and in no way to his want of stamina; but if this was really the case, would his owner have withdrawn him from what the majority of racegoers regard as the most sporting handicap of the flat-racing season, the Cesarewitch? The limitations of his capacity were, however, made plain in the Cambridgeshire.

Of the handicap horses that have performed during 1897, much that is good may be written, much that is moderate, much that is bad. Winkfield's Pride must have gladdened many Irish hearts, and filled many Irish purses, his one defeat having been

sustained at the hands or heels of an animal whom we hope and believe to have been one of the horses of the generation. The victory in France of the son of Winkfield was so well received by the natives that there can be little doubt our neighbours had recognised the fact that the Irish horse was infinitely superior to their own form, and had backed him accordingly.

Clorane, who looks as if he would rather enjoy carrying a good 14-st. man fox-catching, has perhaps been somewhat of a disappointment from the point of view of the Turf scribe, who loves the record breaker; but he has always been carrying lumps of weight, and his defeat of Diakka at nearly 2 st. in the Doveridge Stakes, by the light of recent events, reads a fine performance. Perhaps, however, the most remarkable feature in the history of the year's handicaps has been the resuscitation of that grand old warrior Victor Wild, who seemed last 'back end' to have gone hopelessly and irretrievably to the bad, and looked rather like joining the ranks of the platers unless a merciful policy were exercised by his owner. Coming out like a giant refreshed at Lincoln, he ran most respectably with the nice little racing weight of 9 st. 9 lb., and performed again with the utmost brilliancy and dash when attempting to give the mysterious Clwyd 2 st. 4 lb., and 9 lb. to that 'smasher' Kilcock at Kempton. Again his running in the Hunt Cup was of the highest order; for Knight of the Thistle had been immensely fancied for the Derby of 1896, and here Victor Wild, smilingly presenting him with no less than 2 st. 7 lb., fairly hustled him up. It would have been indeed a matter of deep regret to all true sportsmen if the good horse had not been allowed to taste the sweets of victory after all these deeds of derring-do, and hearty was the enthusiasm when he accomplished what many thought was an impossible task in giving Sandia 3 st. and a decisive beating. The way in which the public idol went down to the post on that occasion was remarkable; he seemed thoroughly to appreciate the applause of his numerous admirers and really appeared to be nodding his acknowledgments. How different his demeanour and bearing to that of the 'thinking' horse when on his way to take part in a race—a proceeding of which he has thoroughly sickened many years ago! He is always full of thought, but never so thoughtful as on an occasion of this kind. The keen observer may almost detect from the way he carries his ears and his listless gait the purport of these ruminations, the upshot of which is that he has had a great deal too much of the game.

There are many thinking horses now figuring on the Turf, and they are a source of great danger and anxiety to those who

are in any way connected with them. Horses have far more retentive memories, too, than people give them credit for possessing. I think it was Rosy Morn who, having been indulged with two dead-heats and a run off with Deuce of Clubs at Sandown, was some years after taken over from Epsom to Esher, with the view of having some nice exhilarating exercise there in the shape of a trial. When he recognised the place, he proceeded to lie down and have a determined series of fits, I imagine of an apoplectic nature. Many people, too, confidently looked forward to the success of Court Ball in the Duke of York Stakes at Kempton, where he was certainly most leniently treated on his running with Bradwardine at Epsom in June. His backers had probably lost sight of the fact that it was on this same Kempton course that the Royal Hampton horse had passed some of the most unpleasant moments of his existence when battling out a most stirring and exciting finish with that good horse Best Man, the upshot being a dead-heat, with Court Ball in receipt of the nice little trifle of 3 st. 4 lb. I have seen a notorious rogue leading a Leger favourite a really rattling gallop on the historic Town Moor, and going like a lion till he approached the stand; when, I suppose under the impression that the hated finish and inevitable dressing down was just about to begin, he stopped as if he had been picked off by a dum-dum bullet, and could hardly be persuaded even to walk home.

But, quite apart from having to grapple with many of the thinking, ungenerous, and unsound during the past season, the state of the going must have been a source of the greatest anxiety to the painstaking trainer; for, although we experienced practically six months' continuous rain from about the middle of August 1896, the going as early as March in the present year was decidedly on the hard side, owing to sun and wind; and throughout the whole of the season trainers who prepare their charges on downs such as exist at Lambourne, Stockbridge, Russley, and Pimperne have had an obvious advantage over their less fortunate brethren who train at such places as Newmarket and Epsom. In this connexion I would warn the racing novice, whatever be his position or degree, to religiously avoid passing any disparaging remarks on the going to any clerk of the course or official of a meeting. He may with comparative impunity adversely criticise the position of the stand, giving as his opinion that it was a great pity when they were about it that they did not erect it at an angle from which racing could be seen, and in such a position that the animal leading some six lengths at the distance might be picked out with some pretension to accuracy;

he may regret that the chops served in the grill-room are obviously imported from abroad, and that the sobriety of the waiters is not above suspicion; he may also speak disparagingly of the value of the stakes to be run for, and even attack both the past and present life of the official himself; but if he sets any store on his peace and quietude, he will pass no adverse remarks on the going. I once had the hardihood, after a fortnight's continuous rain throughout the length and breadth of the land, to remark to an official at one of our drawing-room meetings which possesses a stiff clay soil, reduced to a quagmire of such intensity that even the thirstiest soul thought several times before crossing it to enjoy the hospitality of the carriage folk on the other side of the course, that the going was 'rather holding.' His reply deserves embalming. Haughtily he answered, 'Well, the going just in front of the stand here *where it has been raining* may be a trifle heavy, but on the far side it is simply perfect. I ought to know, for I have just walked round the whole of it.' The condition of his immaculate boots deprived this *ex parte* statement of much of its value. A man who will hazard his future welfare in defending the obviously rotten going on a racecourse deserves more recognition than the racing official at present receives; but, honestly, there can be little doubt that the going on many of our courses leaves much to be desired, even at meetings where big dividends are otherwise deservedly earned and mammoth prizes given.

Habitual racegoers who never dream of walking round the course would, I feel sure, be somewhat surprised and even alarmed if they would carefully examine some of the tracks at even the best conducted of our suburban race meetings. Indeed, many of them compare unfavourably, as far as the state of the ground is concerned, with the courses so seldom used in the wild West, such as Plymouth, Torquay, and Totnes—the latter probably unique in the annals of sport, for there in many of the races the horses have to cross the flowing main, in the shape of a very respectable river, twice, and gallop down a macadam road for nearly a quarter of a mile, with other pleasant and varied interludes. It was on this classic ground that one of the local hunt servants, who frequently rode at the meeting, had invariably attached to his horse's bit a long cord; and if anything happened, as it frequently did, which involved their parting company, he would play his erstwhile mount as if he were a seven-pound trout, and, having succeeded in landing him, would resume the even tenor of his way as if nothing out of the ordinary had taken place.

So far in this article reference has been made only to the good handicap performances, for my pen would fairly blush were it called upon to analyse some of the second-rate handicap form and some of the form which has practically no rating at all. One's only wonder is that owners can be found or, when discovered, can be induced to keep some of the 'others' referred to in the heading of this article in training at all. A young and enthusiastic sportsman, having purchased for some 30*l.* a faded photograph of what had once been a racehorse, approached an experienced and, luckily for the enthusiast, a conscientious trainer, with the object of inducing him to train his new purchase. To the hesitating question as to what he had better do with his bundle of rags, the answer came like a bolt from the blue, 'Better shoot him, sir.' This advice, though on the face of it almost brutal, was the very best and kindest that could have been tendered both for horse and man. I would add a word with regard to the handicapping in Nurseries. It is a well-known rule of the Turf that a two-year-old who has never run, when entered in a Nursery, is always honoured with the proud position of top-weight. Now the proprietor of the Parachute colt is painfully aware of the fact that his animal, though useful, has about as much chance of successfully presenting the Balloon filly with a stone—which he will be certainly called upon to do under the present condition of affairs—as he has of winning the National next March; so he is forced to cast about him with a view to getting matters more favourably arranged for his horse. This can only be accomplished in one way—a series of 'airings;' and to this most unsatisfactory state of affairs may be ascribed most of the in-and-out form of our young horses. A remedy I must leave for abler pens than mine to devise, but I do not think a fatal blow would be struck to the well-being of the Turf if Nurseries were abolished altogether. If a man has a two-year-old so moderate that he cannot win a race unless he is in receipt of some 2 st. from indifferent horses of his own age, let him either have him shot or give him the benefit of the rest and time which in all probability he urgently needs.

With regard to the two-year-olds of 1897, if make and shape go for anything I think one may look forward with some confidence to their turning out a better lot than those we saw last year. Taking them all round, they appear to have more bone and substance, and look more like going on generally, than their immediate predecessors. I believe that not a few racing men failed to support Dieudonné at Kempton for the somewhat extraordinary reason that he was 'too good-looking,' and many people

too, I remember used to find the same remarkable fault in Morion. This is a failing which one would wish was more marked and more general than it is at present. Dieudonné is, indeed, a handsome colt. He recalls vivid memories of his sire, Amphion, and, to the middle-aged, recollections of a memorable day at Croydon, when that worthy took on L'Abbesse de Jouarre, both of them making their *début* on this occasion. I saw Amphion at the Compton stud not long since, and, though not a betting man, should like to have wagered a small sum that his name would be associated with something really good before much more water had flowed under London Bridge; he remains the perfect gentleman he always was. In the next box Avington was standing, grown much like Melton; and what a beautifully turned little fellow he was! His next-door neighbour was Crafton, who, as the Chopette colt, so nearly effected a surprise in Paradox's Two Thousand. Cyllene is a capital send-off for Bonavista, being apparently one of those good animals that can not only give away weight, but, what is even still more meritorious, fight out a finish in the most dogged manner under adverse conditions. Ninus speaks well for Sheen; Disraeli with luck will certainly not injure Galopin's great reputation, nor does Ayrshire look like being left out in the cold.

No notice of the racing season would be complete without a reference, however short, to the latest innovation on the Turf—the starting machine—known, I believe, among its numerous detractors as the 'trap.' There can be no doubt that it will meet with great opposition from many quarters, and even on its merits it is no certainty that it will turn out a success; but at the same time what a blessing it would be if, through this or some other form of mechanism, horses could be got off promptly and fairly! The harm that is done to young horses at the start is incalculable. A jockey is as proud as a peacock of the reputation he has somehow acquired for possessing 'hands.' This means that no living horse must, under any circumstances, get away for any distance with him, even if this involves the animal's head being nearly sawn from his body; the result being that his mouth is ruined, very probably his hocks badly sprung, and his temper certainly not improved. But, apart from the agreeable condition of things which no delay at the post would mean for our equine friends, what a relief it would also be for the onlookers! How wearisome are the half-hour waits at the post which are of such frequent occurrence, and, of course, entirely unavoidable! Any unprejudiced person who has been in the habit of going down to the start is always prepared

for a long delay, his only wonder being how it is that the horses ever get off at all, especially at places like Epsom and Brighton, where getting well away is half the battle.

In conclusion, I would make a few remarks on the jumpers whom we have seen out in 1897. I know they are only alluded to with the utmost contempt by those who follow flat-racing only, but, believe me, there is much good in them—much to like, much to respect. A horse that can get over the National course at a good pace, and not bother himself greatly about the fences, is an animal to be spoken of with reverence, not treated with contempt. He may have been of no account on the flat, and for this reason has laid himself open to the revilings of the five-furlong autocrat; but may not this have been because his virtues were inherent? And when these have been developed by a course of long work and schooling over fences, whereby his good points have asserted themselves, and muscle has been put on in the right places, surely he is entitled to a good character in his new situation? On the day Manifesto won the National he was undoubtedly a clinking good animal, a magnificent fencer, who took but little out of himself at his jumps, a sticker of the first water, and a horse endowed with a fair turn of speed. What more could the most exacting ask for in a chaser? And though he was defeated at Manchester shortly afterwards, it is setting a horse a tremendous task to run him a month after the National, especially as, in the opinion of many good judges, it requires quite six months for a horse to get over the sort of preparation which is required for the blue ribbon of the cross-country season. Have we not seen the great Cloister himself defeated under similar conditions, and by a horse that had already on that selfsame day had a rare gruelling in a hurdle race? Besides, Manifesto regained his laurels at Sandown, carrying, of course, top weight in a first-class field over three and a half miles. There were also many real good horses running in hurdle races. Soliman, Knight of Rhodes, Harold, Montauk, Fossicker, Amphidamas, all looked good class horses, and in appearance, at any rate, would not have disgraced fields for big events on the flat. The riders over a country, too, during 1897 were, I think—and I allude both to professional and amateur jockeys—distinctly above the average. The younger ones seemed to be coming to hand nicely, and the elder ones showed no sign of senile decay. They are a gallant race, and may they have but few tosses—they must have some—and fall lightly when they do 'come it' during the season that will be well on when these pages appear.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

THE only one thing certain about the two-year-old form of the past season is that it leaves superabundant ground for discussion and difference of opinion. When I wrote last on this subject the Middle Park Plate had just been run for, and 'the ring' offered even money against the first three, Dieudonné, Disraeli, and Wildfowler, for the Derby. Not a few of my readers do not bet, and their state is possibly much the more gracious; but a record of the odds is valuable as showing the trend of the public estimate. I do not think that anybody accepted the offer of the ring, and by the light of subsequent events abstinence seems wise. Dieudonné ran only respectably in the Dewhurst Plate; Disraeli's performance at Sandown was not much removed from moderate, and at the same time it is necessary to remember that in the Middle Park Plate, under adverse circumstances, Disraeli gave Wildfowler weight and beat him. A rumour is rife to the effect that Dieudonné is touched in his wind, and his prospects depend on two 'ifs'—if this be true, and if, assuming it to be untrue, he can stay. On behalf of Disraeli it may be urged that he has never been seen at his best. The adverse circumstances alluded to above are that he had been stopped in his work before the Middle Park, that he was coughing (before and after), and that in racing from the start with the runaway Orzil, Disraeli destroyed whatever chance he may have had. Nevertheless he beat Wildfowler; and of these three I prefer the chances of Disraeli, whose Sandown failure has legitimate excuse in the just mentioned fact that he was coughing rather badly at the time, bes des having been interfered with in the race, and having the Middle Park Plate 'in him,' as the phrase runs.

What, then, is to beat Disraeli in the Derby—and by the way the colt has been blistered in his hocks since he last ran, so that at any rate a suggestion of weakness has been discovered in him? Of horses that have run, the best of the Kingsclere lot must be dangerous. Which this best will prove to be is another matter. Hawfinch was laboriously kicked out of the paddock and energetically flogged down to the post—such an exhibition is altogether remarkable—before he won the Dewhurst Plate; but even if he remains sound I cannot believe that he is a good horse, and putting aside the Ascot running of Batt, when he was out of sorts, it took him a long time to beat Royal Footstep, notwithstanding that she had been stopped in her work shortly before they met. Possibly a better than either of these may be discovered in the stable. Charles Wood told me after winning on Dunlop that he thinks the colt worth the 5,000 guineas that Mr. Rucker paid the Prince of Wales for him, and the colt may very possibly earn the money for his owner; but I do not think this will be in the 'classic' races, and I expect the return will come from the ring rather than through Messrs. Weatherby. St. Evox 'makes a noise,' and Jeddah, I feel convinced, will not stay. Cyllene, Champ de Mars, and Ninus are not in the Derby, nor is The Baker.

The question remains, what 'dark horses' are there in the Derby? And for one there is Brio, a son of Galopin and Briarroot, who was believed to be as good as, if not better than, Champ de Mars. As Brio was never really trained this year that fact cannot have been actually ascertained, and the idea may be wrong; still Brio must be regarded as a possible source of danger, very likely as a probable source, to the best of his opponents. The much-talked-of Isabinda, own sister to St. Frusquin, went all to pieces in the summer, and nothing is really known about her except that she is a great, fine filly, who looked not unworthy of her relationship to a horse of the first rank. The Prince of Wales's Ormathwaite is a very doubtful quantity. This again was a much-talked-of animal, well grown, fairly good-looking, and a good mover. Much was hoped of him, on I fancy somewhat indefinite grounds, and apparently the hopes gradually gave way to fears. Angus, a son of St. Serf and Scotch Agnes, and very like his sire, was in the summer better than his stable companion Disraeli, and their trainer, I believe, fancied that the latter might beat Champ de Mars at Derby (as he did),

on the ground that he was 'nearly as good as Angus.' Whether Disraeli may not have 'come on,' and that considerably, after the gallop that induced this estimate of their respective merits, is another matter, and it seems to me extremely probable this is so, for the reason that Disraeli's hocks had given some trouble, and he may not have shown his subsequent capacity. I have some reason to suppose that the owner of these two colts proposes to have Disraeli specially trained for the Derby, to run Angus in the Two Thousand, and afterwards in the Grand Prix, should it seem desirable to send him over to France. But much has to happen before then, and early intentions are frequently changed by force of circumstances. At present I certainly do not propose to formulate any idea as to what is likely to win the Derby. Several months must elapse before we shall see how things are really shaping.

Lord Granby is good enough to write to me as follows with reference to my little controversy with 'Ouida:' 'Dear Rapier,—In your October "Notes" you devote some space to a correspondence between "Ouida" and yourself concerning certain passages in that clever work "The Massarenes" on the subjects of shooting, and cover shooting in particular. May I be allowed to say a word on this matter? Undoubtedly—in my opinion at least—"Ouida" writes about this form of sport on insufficient knowledge, if she will allow me to say so; and much that she says is very, very wide of the mark. But nevertheless some points on which she touches are well worthy of consideration. Personally, like yourself, I have never heard the word "battue" used in this country in connexion with a day's shooting. But it may be, for all that. One thing is quite certain, and that is, pheasant shooting has, of late years, been made a far more scientific and difficult form of sport than it was in what are termed "the good old days." No one goes out nowadays to "seek out the rocketer" in a thick hedgerow, and having discovered him, to destroy him by shooting him as he flies away just in front of the gun. Pheasants are now "put over" the guns as high as possible; and I think I am not exaggerating when I say that probably the most difficult shot the modern sportsman has presented to him is the high pheasant. If there are still places where the birds come low and easy (which is as good as saying they are not worth shooting at), one may be sure they are either entirely in the hands of a head keeper who knows nothing of his business, or belong to

some *nouveau riche* who has lately essayed to join the ranks of the "country gentlemen," and is trying to shoot his way into society, as others do by going on the Turf, or becoming "useful" to some big personage.

'No, a properly managed "big shoot" is an excellent performance, either to assist in, or to look on at. "Ouida" may be astonished to hear that at any such there is nearly always a tacit understanding that no "easy" birds are to be shot at. By "easy birds" I mean pheasants rising just in front of the shooters when walking through cover, or going low over the forward guns. Again "Ouida" inveighs against the rearing and shooting of "tame home-fed birds." As a matter of fact, speaking from considerable practical experience, I can with truth aver that "reared" pheasants are on the average wilder than wild ones. This may seem a bold assertion, but it is a fact. Wild pheasants come to the guns not one whit better or higher than those which have been brought up under hens. In fact, the reverse is rather the case. "Ouida" also declaims against the amount of game killed on occasions during a day's cover shooting, and abuses the manner of its distribution. Game must be treated as an article of food as well as of sport, and therefore a certain amount must find its way into the market. And this is as it should be, for it is an excellent variant from the usual bill of fare. A great quantity of game finds its way to the various hospitals throughout the country, and is much valued therein.

'As for the amount of money which shooting circulates throughout the United Kingdom, one can only say it is immense; and the number of persons who are employed either for the whole of the year, or part of it, is very large indeed. The agricultural labourer—not too well paid as a rule—gets considerable benefits from becoming a beater during the winter, when farm work is light and uncertain; gets his half a crown and his dinner a day, and, moreover, very generally likes his job and enjoys the shooting. Many such—good fellows all—are well known to me. Many a talk have we had; and I well know the feeling there would be amongst these undemonstrative men were shooting to receive any serious check. Where, however, "Ouida" has, I think, sound ground to go on, is, that there has been of late a tendency to overdo the size of the bags obtained—to over-shooting. The idea

of beating the next-door neighbour's score has been too much in evidence. Here "Ouida" appears right—to me, at least. A "good day's shooting" should not necessarily imply an *enormous* amount of slain. It should rather mean a day when there has been ample to shoot at, birds properly brought over the guns, and not too many gunners. I have seen days which have been completely spoilt by *too* much shooting being provided. Of course, I am alluding to cover shooting only. Driving, either grouse or partridge, comes into a different category altogether. There are still, I regret to say, a certain number of persons, both young and old, who estimate the value of a day's shooting solely by the amount of game killed. These, as sportsmen, are past praying for.

'Again "Ouida" seems to me to have much right on her side when she alludes to the indiscriminate slaughter of what keepers call "vermin." Under this heading—generally I trust from ignorance—keepers, unless sharply checked, are apt to destroy every wild bird and animal they fancy touches eggs or young pheasants and partridges. And what can you expect when articles such as "By Hedge, Stream, and Spinney," in this month's "English Illustrated Magazine," appear? In that article, prompted apparently by a forty-three-inch round the chest keeper, it is laid down that amongst other animals and birds, badgers, hedgehogs, otters, herons, magpies, and—oh, horror!—owls are to be classed as "vermin," and treated accordingly. Also the use of pole-traps, the most brutal and cruel of all traps, is advocated and illustrated in most painful detail. All I can say is, that the forty-three-inch chest-measurement keeper may thank his stars he is not in my employ, as he would not be so for more than twenty-four hours longer after these performances were discovered. Badgers, hedgehogs and owls are perfectly, or almost entirely, harmless, as far as game is concerned. Owls especially it is criminal to destroy. I once had to interview a head keeper of a large estate on the subject of vermin killing. His tale of how the huge owls came down in the night and almost frightened the watchers over the young pheasants was wonderful to listen to; and his face was a study to watch when he was briefly informed that if he, or any of his underkeepers, ever destroyed any owls, or certain other birds and beasts hitherto under the ban, instant dismissal would be the result. What has been the upshot of this? What has happened since these orders were given is

that more game is shot yearly on the property in question; the expenses have lessened (I don't attribute this, mind you, to the reappearance of owls or other wild things); owls, jays, badgers, hedgehogs, with an occasional magpie, are always to be seen or heard about the place. The decrease in the cost of preserving can be accounted for by the fact that more careful overlooking of the keeper's arrangements has taken place. No! a fair number of the beautiful wild birds and harmless beasts that inhabit English woods and fields should *always* be allowed to exist therein. Owners and lessees of shootings should prevent their keepers from the ignorant and harmful system so often employed of classing nearly every wild thing other than game birds and beasts under the head of vermin. So far from spoiling their sport, they will probably do the reverse, and moreover, add immensely to the charms of English country life.'

It is natural that I should have a high opinion of Lord Ribblesdale's book, 'The Queen's Hounds' (Longman & Co.), seeing that three of the chapters first appeared in this Magazine. It is not too much to say that the book could scarcely have been better done. Lord Ribblesdale is a man who fulfils with the very utmost thoroughness every task he undertakes. As a former Master of the Buckhounds he obtained a comprehensive knowledge of his subject which could scarcely have been gained by anyone who had not enjoyed this special experience. The author is a scholar as well as a sportsman; he rides and writes equally well, and has a dry, quiet humour of his own which must make his book very pleasant reading even to those who do not take any particular interest in the pursuit of the carted deer. Lord Ribblesdale calmly surveys the sport, noting its strong and its weak points with commendable impartiality, and, of course, he is able to dispose of the charges of cruelty which are advanced with most vehemence by those who know least about it. During the three years over which his Mastership extended, he thinks he lost four deer, though he is speaking from memory, and says that it may have been five; but 'not one of these four or five deer was killed or even touched by the hounds.' Lord Ribblesdale has considerably expanded the chapter on Hunting in France which he kindly let me use in these pages, and this portion of the book is the more interesting because comparatively few Englishmen know anything of hunting across the Channel, a fact which seems to me to afford ample justification for the inclusion of matter not

covered by the title. The book is full of information; but the style, the pleasant manner in which the information is conveyed, is its chief charm. The illustrations are excellent. I wish I had more space to deal with various points discussed, but readers will find them in the volume, which I cordially recommend.

My correspondence on the subject of 'kills to cartridges'—what should be the proportion of kills to cartridges in the case of an average good shot?—is so extensive that I cannot make room for it this month, or very well summarise it. I will return to it in the next number. But how one's ideas differ! You are outside a covert; birds come nicely; you get well on them; a low, skimming cock is silently making away—in contrast to the clucking and cluttering ones that come over your head—widish on the right; and, realising his speed, you allow enough margin, and 'down' him. A rabbit gives you not much more than half a chance, but you take it, and roll him over. Suddenly there are excited cries from the beaters; a woodcock has been seen, comes your way, and, acting with just the right amount of deliberation and rapidity, you secure the prize. 'Kills to cartridges?' Well! suppose you say three to two, and even then you fancy you are making undue allowance for mistakes? But you go to the next stand, in a drive, where the branches have still a rather plentiful clothing of leaves. On your way you have put up a partridge, which has flown on in spite of the two barrels you sent after it, and as soon as you are in your place, a hen pheasant comes just where the foliage is clearest, just where you hoped birds *would* come; but somehow you miss her as she approaches, and as she flies over your head, feel, even as you pull the trigger, that you are far behind her. How *did* you manage to miss that? And there is a cock on the left—bang!—no result—bang again!—he 'dips' a bit, but flies on. This is exasperating! More clucking and cluttering, another cock—got *him*, at any rate—and there's a hare! *Did* you? You fancy so, with a shade of doubt, however; after the beat your loader looks for him in vain, you go, but also fail to find him, nor is there any trace of a subsequent rabbit which you feel *positive* you could *not* have missed. You get your next two birds, a third takes a second barrel, and you miss another at which, in truth, you ought not to have shot at all, he was so far off. How is that? Eighteen empty cases—with two outside for the partridge, making twenty—and only five birds gathered! That woefully pulls down the average: you must reconsider the question!

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